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THE
WORKS
OF
WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

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ROBERTSON'S WORKS:

IN NINE VOLUMES. — VOL. VII.

AMERICA.

HISTORY OF AMERICA.

BOOK IV. CONTINUED.

Political institutions. IV. FROM the domestic state of the Americans, the transition to the consideration of their civil government and political institutions is natural. In every inquiry concerning the operations of men when united together in society, the first object of attention should be their mode of subsistence. Accordingly as that varies, their laws and policy must be different. The institution suited to the ideas and exigencies of tribes, which subsist chiefly by fishing or hunting, and which have as yet acquired but an imperfect conception of any species of property, will be much more simple than those which must take place when the earth is cultivated with regular industry; and a right of property, not only in its productions, but in the soil itself, is completely ascertained.

Mode of subsistence. All the people of America, now under review, belong to the former class. But though they may all be comprehended under the general denomination of savage, the advances which they had made in the art of procuring to themselves a certain and plentiful subsistence, were very unequal. On the extensive plains of South America, man appears in one of the rudest states in which he has been ever observed, or, perhaps, can exist. Several tribes depend entirely upon the bounty of nature for sub-

sistence. They discover no solicitude, they employ little foresight, they scarcely exert any industry, to secure what is necessary for their support. The *Tobayers* of Brazil, the *Guaxeros* of Tierra Firmè, the *Caiguas*, the *Moros*, and several other people of Paraguay, are unacquainted with every species of cultivation. They neither sow nor plant. Even the culture of the manioc, of which cassada bread is made, is an art too intricate for their ingenuity, or too fatiguing to their indolence. The roots which the earth produces spontaneously, the fruits, the berries, and the seeds, which they gather in the woods, together with lizards and other reptiles, which multiply amazingly with the heat of the climate in a fat soil, moistened by frequent rains, supply them with food

during some part of the year.^a At other times they subsist by fishing; and nature seems to have indulged the laziness of the South-American tribes by the liberality with which she ministers, in this way, to their wants. The vast rivers of that region in America abound with an infinite variety of the most delicate fish. The lakes and marshes formed by the annual overflowing of the waters, are filled with all the different species, where they remain shut up, as in natural reservoirs, for the use of the inhabitants. They swarm in such shoals, that in some places they are caught without art or industry.^b In others, the natives have discovered a method of infecting the water with the juice of certain plants, by which the fish are so intoxicated, that they float on the surface, and are taken with the hand.^c Some tribes have ingenuity enough to preserve them without salt, by drying or smoking them

^a Nieuhoff. Hist. of Brasil. Church. Coll. ii. 134: Simon, Conquista de Tierra Firmè, p. 166. Techo, Account of Paraguay, &c. Church. vi. 78. Lettr. Edif. 23. 384. 10. 190. Lozano, Descrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 81. Ribas, Histor. de los Triunfos, &c. p. 7.

^b See Note I.

^c See Note II.

upon hurdles over a slow fire.^d The prolific quality of the rivers in South America induces many of the natives to resort to their banks, and to depend almost entirely for nourishment on what their waters supply with such profusion.^e In this part of the globe, hunting seems not to have been the first employment of men, or the first effort of their invention and labour to obtain food. They were fishers before they became hunters; and as the occupations of the former do not call for equal exertions of activity, or talents, with those of the latter; people in that state appear to possess neither the same degree of enterprise nor of ingenuity. The petty nations, adjacent to the Maragnon and Orinoco, are manifestly the most inactive and least intelligent of all the Americans.

By hunt-
ing.

None but tribes contiguous to great rivers can sustain themselves in this manner. The greater part of the American nations, dispersed over the forests with which their country is covered, do not procure subsistence with the same facility. For although these forests, especially in the southern continent of America, are stored plentifully with game, considerable efforts of activity and ingenuity are requisite in pursuit of it. Necessity incited the natives to the one, and taught them the other. Hunting became their principal occupation; and as it called forth strenuous exertions of courage, of force, and of invention, it was deemed no less honourable than necessary. This occupation was peculiar to the men. They were trained to it from their earliest youth. A bold and dexterous hunter ranked next in fame to the distinguished warrior, and an alliance with the former is often courted in preference to one with the latter.^f Hardly any device, which the ingenuity of

^d Condam. 159. Gumilla, ii. 37. Lettr. Edif. 14. 199. 23. 328. Acugna, Relat. de la Riv. des Amas. 138.

^e Barrere, Relat. de Fr. Equin. p. 155.

^f P. Martyr, Decad. p. 324. Gumilla, ii. 4, &c. Acugna, i. 156.

^g Charlev. Histoire de la N. France, iii. 115.

man has discovered for insnaring or destroying wild animals, was unknown to the Americans. While engaged in this favourite exercise, they shake off the indolence peculiar to their nature, the latent powers and vigour of their minds are roused, and they become active, persevering, and indefatigable. Their sagacity in finding their prey, and their address in killing it, are equal. Their reason and their senses being constantly directed towards this one object, the former displays such fertility of invention, and the latter acquire such a degree of acuteness, as appear almost incredible. They discern the footsteps of a wild beast, which escape every other eye, and can follow them with certainty through the pathless forest. If they attack their game openly, their arrow seldom errs from the mark;^b if they endeavour to circumvent it by art, it is almost impossible to avoid their toils. Among several tribes, their young men were not permitted to marry, until they had given such proofs of their skill in hunting as put it beyond doubt that they were capable of providing for a family. Their ingenuity, always on the stretch, and sharpened by emulation, as well as necessity, has struck out many inventions, which greatly facilitate success in the chase. The most singular of these is the discovery of a poison in which they dip the arrows employed in hunting. The slightest wound with those envenomed shafts is mortal. If they only pierce the skin, the blood fixes and congeals in a moment, and the strongest animal falls motionless to the ground. Nor does this poison, notwithstanding its violence and subtlety, infect the flesh of the animal which it kills. That may be eaten with perfect safety, and retain its native relish and qualities. All the nations situated upon the banks of the Maragnon and

^b Biet. Voy. de France Equin. 357. Davies' Discov. of the River of Amaz. Purchas. iv. p. 1287.

Orinoco are acquainted with this composition, the chief ingredient in which is the juice extracted from the root of the *curare*, a species of withe.¹ In other parts of America, they employ the juice of the *manchenille* for the same purpose, and it operates with no less fatal activity. To people possessed of those secrets, the bow is a more destructive weapon than the musket, and, in their skilful hands, does great execution among the birds and beasts which abound in the forests of America.

By agri-
culture.

But the life of a hunter gradually leads man to a state more advanced. The chase, even where prey is abundant, and the dexterity of the hunter much improved, affords but an uncertain maintenance, and at some seasons it must be suspended altogether. If a savage trusts to his bow alone for food, he and his family will be often reduced to extreme distress.^k Hardly any region of the earth furnishes man spontaneously with what his wants require. In the mildest climates, and most fertile soils, his own industry and foresight must be exerted, in some degree, to secure a regular supply of food. Their experience of this surmounts the abhorrence of labour natural to savage nations, and compels them to have recourse to culture, as subsidiary to hunting. In particular situations, some small tribes may subsist by fishing, independent of any production of the earth, raised by their own industry. But throughout all America, we scarcely meet with any nation of hunters, which does not practise some species of cultivation.

The vari-
ous fruits
of their
culture.

The agriculture of the Americans, however, is neither extensive nor laborious. As game and fish are their principal food, all they aim at by cultivation, is to supply any occasional defect

¹ Gumilla, ii. 1, &c. Condam. 308.
Hist. of Guiana, 281, &c.

Recherch. Philos. ii. 239. Bancroft's Nat.
^k See Note III.

of these. In the southern continent of America, the natives confined their industry to rearing a few plants, which, in a rich soil and warm climate, were easily trained to maturity. The chief of these is *maize*, well known in Europe by the name of Turkey or Indian wheat, a grain extremely prolific, of simple culture, agreeable to the taste, and affording a strong hearty nourishment. The second is the *manioc*, which grows to the size of a large shrub, or small tree, and produces roots somewhat resembling parsnips. After carefully squeezing out the juice, these roots are grated down to a fine powder, and formed into thin cakes, called *cassada* bread, which, though insipid to the taste, proves no contemptible food.¹ As the juice of the manioc is a deadly poison, some authors have celebrated the ingenuity of the Americans, in converting a noxious plant into wholesome nourishment. But it should rather be considered as one of the desperate expedients for procuring subsistence, to which necessity reduces rude nations; or, perhaps, men were led to the use of it by a progress, in which there is nothing marvellous. One species of manioc is altogether free of any poisonous quality, and may be eaten without any preparation but that of roasting it in the embers. This, it is probable, was first used by the Americans as food; and necessity having gradually taught them the art of separating its pernicious juice from the other species, they have by experience found it to be more prolific as well as more nourishing.^m The third is the *plantain*, which, though it rises to the height of a tree, is of such quick growth, that in less than a year it rewards the industry of the cultivator with its fruit.

¹ Sloane Hist. of Jam. Introd. p. 18. Labat. i. 394. Acosta. Hist. Ind. Occid. Natur. lib. iv. c. 17. Ulloa, i. 62. Aublet Mem. sur le Manioc. Hist. des Plantes, tom. ii. p. 65, &c.

^m Martyr, Decad. 301. Labat. i. 411. Gumilla, iii. 192. Maschucha, Milic. Indiana, 164. See Note IV.

This, when roasted, supplies the place of bread, and is both palatable and nourishing.ⁿ The fourth is the *potatoe*, whose culture and qualities are too well known to need any description. The fifth is *pimento*, a small tree, yielding a strong aromatic spice. The Americans, who, like other inhabitants of warm climates, delight in whatever is hot and of poignant flavour, deem this seasoning a necessary of life, and mingle it copiously with every kind of food they take.^o

Such are the various productions, which were the chief object of culture among the hunting tribes on the continent of America; and with a moderate exertion of active and provident industry, these might have yielded a full supply to the wants of a numerous people. But men, accustomed to the free and vagrant life of hunters, are incapable of regular application to labour, and consider agriculture as a secondary and inferior occupation. Accordingly, the provision for subsistence, arising from cultivation, was so limited and scanty among the Americans, that, upon any accidental failure of their usual success in hunting, they were often reduced to extreme distress.

In the islands, the mode of subsisting was considerably different. None of the large animals which abound on the continent were known there. Only four species of quadrupeds, besides a kind of small dumb dog, existed in the islands, the biggest of which did not exceed the size of a rabbit.^p To hunt such diminutive prey, was an occupation which required no effort either of activity or courage. The chief employment of a hunter in the isles was to kill birds, which on the continent are deemed ignoble game, and left chiefly to the pursuit of boys.^q This

ⁿ See Note V.

^o Gumilla, lii. 171. Acosta, lib. iv. c. 20.

^p Oviedo, lib. xii. in proem.

^q Ribas Hist. de los Triumph. p. 13. De la Potherie, ii. 33. iii. 20.

want of animals, as well as their peculiar situation, led the islanders to depend principally upon fishing for their subsistence.^r Their rivers, and the sea with which they are surrounded, supplied them with this species of food. At some particular seasons, turtle, crabs, and other shell-fish, abounded in such numbers, that the natives could support themselves with a facility in which their indolence delighted.^s At other times they ate lizards, and various reptiles of odious forms.^t To fishing, the inhabitants of the islands added some degree of agriculture. Maize,^u manioc, and other plants, were cultivated in the same manner as on the continent. But all the fruits of their industry, together with what their soil and climate produced spontaneously, afforded them but a scanty maintenance. Though their demands for food were very sparing, they hardly raised what was sufficient for their own consumption. If a few Spaniards settled in any district, such a small addition of supernumerary mouths soon exhausted their scanty stores, and brought on a famine.

Their agriculture very limited.

Two circumstances, common to all the savage nations of America, concurred with those which I have already mentioned, not only in rendering their agriculture imperfect, but in circumscribing their power in all their operations. They had no tame animals; and they were unacquainted with the useful metals.

Two causes of its imperfection.

In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudest state, appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals, which he has tamed, and reduced to subjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horse which he has reared;

The want of tame animals.

^r Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 1. Gomara, Hist. Gener. c. 28.

^s Gomara Hist. Gener. c. 9. Labat, ii. 221, &c.

^t Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 3.

^u See Note VI.

or tends his numerous herds, which furnish him both with food and clothing: the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himself of its persevering strength: the Laplander has formed the rein-deer to be subservient to his will; and even the people of Kamchatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferior creatures is one of the noblest prerogatives of man, and among the greatest efforts of his wisdom and power. Without this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch who has no subjects; a master without servants, and must perform every operation by the strength of his own arm. Such was the condition of all the rude nations in America. Their reason was so little improved, or their union so incomplete, that they seem not to have been conscious of the superiority of their nature, and suffered all the animal creation to retain its liberty, without establishing their own authority over any one species. Most of the animals, indeed, which have been rendered domestic in our continent, do not exist in the New World; but those peculiar to it are neither so fierce nor so formidable, as to have exempted them from servitude. There are some animals of the same species in both continents. But the rein-deer, which has been tamed and broken to the yoke in one hemisphere, runs wild in the other. The *bison* of America is manifestly of the same species with the horned cattle of the other hemisphere.* The latter, even among the rudest nations in our continent, have been rendered domestic; and, in consequence of his dominion over them, man can accomplish works of labour with greater facility, and has made a great addition to his means of subsistence. The inhabitants of many regions of the New World, where the bison abounds, might have derived the same advantages from it. It is not of a nature so in-

* Buffon, Artic. *Bison*.

docile, but that it might have been trained to be as subservient to man as our cattle.¹ But a savage, in that uncultivated state wherein the Americans were discovered, is the enemy of the other animals, not their superior. He wastes and destroys, but knows not how to multiply or to govern them.²

This, perhaps, is the most notable distinction between the inhabitants of the Ancient and New Worlds, and a high pre-eminence of civilized men above such as continue rude. The greatest operations of man in changing and improving the face of nature, as well as his most considerable efforts in cultivating the earth, are accomplished by means of the aid which he receives from the animals whom he has tamed, and employs in labour. It is by their strength that he subdues the stubborn soil, and converts the desert or marsh into a fruitful field. But man, in his civilized state, is so accustomed to the service of the domestic animals, that he seldom reflects upon the vast benefits which he derives from it. If we were to suppose him, even when most improved, to be deprived of their useful ministry, his empire over nature must in some measure cease, and he would remain a feeble animal, at a loss how to subsist, and incapable of attempting such arduous undertakings as their assistance enables him to execute with ease.

It is a doubtful point, whether the domination of man over the animal creation, or his acquiring the useful metals, has contributed most to extend his power. The era of this important discovery is unknown, and in our hemisphere very remote. It is only by tradition, or by digging up some rude instruments of our forefathers, that we learn that mankind were originally unacquainted

Want of
the useful
metals.

¹ *Nouv. Découverte par Hennepin*, p. 192. *Kalm*, i. 207.

² *Buffon Hist. Nat.* ix. 85. *Hist. Philos. et Polit. des Etablissem. des Europ. dans les deux Indes*, vi. 364.

with the use of metals, and endeavoured to supply the want of them by employing flints, shells, bones, and other hard substances, for the same purposes which metals serve among polished nations. Nature completes the formation of some metals. Gold, silver, and copper, are found in their perfect state in the clefts of rocks, in the sides of mountains, or the channels of rivers. These were accordingly the metals first known, and first applied to use. But iron, the most serviceable of all, and to which man is most indebted, is never discovered in its perfect form; its gross and stubborn ore must feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious processes, before it become fit for use. Man was long acquainted with the other metals, before he acquired the art of fabricating iron, or attained such ingenuity as to perfect an invention, to which he is indebted for those instruments wherewith he subdues the earth, and commands all its inhabitants. But in this, as well as in many other respects, the inferiority of the Americans was conspicuous. All the savage tribes, scattered over the continent and islands, were totally unacquainted with the metals which their soil produces in great abundance, if we except some trifling quantity of gold, which they picked up in the torrents that descended from their mountains, and formed into ornaments. Their devices to supply this want of the serviceable metals, were extremely rude and awkward. The most simple operation was to them an undertaking of immense difficulty and labour. To fell a tree with no other instruments than hatchets of stone, was employment for a month.^a To form a canoe into shape, and to hollow it, consumed years; and it frequently began to rot before they were able to finish it.^b Their operations in agriculture were equally slow and defective. In a country covered

^a Gumilla, iii. 196.

^b Burde Relat. des Caraïbes, p. 22.

with woods of the hardest timber, the clearing of a small field destined for culture required the united efforts of a tribe, and was a work of much time and great toil. This was the business of the men, and their indolence was satisfied with performing it in a very slovenly manner. The labour of cultivation was left to the women, who, after digging, or rather stirring the field, with wooden mattocks, and stakes hardened in the fire, sowed or planted it; but they were more indebted for the increase to the fertility of the soil, than to their own rude industry.*

Agriculture, even when the strength of man is seconded by that of the animals which he has subjected to the yoke, and his power augmented by the use of the various instruments with which the discovery of metals has furnished him, is still a work of great labour; and it is with the sweat of his brow that he renders the earth fertile. It is not wonderful, then, that people destitute of both these advantages should have made so little progress in cultivation, that they must be considered as depending for subsistence on fishing and hunting, rather than on the fruits of their own labour.

Political
institutions
arising
from this
state.

From this description of the mode of subsisting among the rude American tribes, the form and genius of their political institutions may be deduced, and we are enabled to trace various circumstances of distinction between them and more civilized nations.

1. Divided
into small
communi-
ties.

1. They were divided into small independent communities. While hunting is the chief source of subsistence, a vast extent of territory is requisite for supporting a small number of people. In proportion as men multiply and unite, the wild animals, on which they depend for food, diminish, or fly at a greater distance from the haunts

* Gumilla, iii. 166, &c. Lettr. Edif. xii. 10.

of their enemy. The increase of a society in this state is limited by its own nature, and the members of it must either disperse, like the game which they pursue, or fall upon some better method of procuring food than by hunting. Beasts of prey are by nature solitary and unsocial, they go not forth to the chase in herds, but delight in those recesses of the forest where they can roam and destroy undisturbed. A nation of hunters resembles them both in occupation and in genius. They cannot form into large communities, because it would be impossible to find subsistence; and they must drive to a distance every rival who may encroach on those domains, which they consider as their own. This was the state of all the American tribes, the numbers in each were inconsiderable, though scattered over countries of great extent; they were far removed from one another, and engaged in perpetual hostilities or rivalry.[†] In America, the word *nation* is not of the same import as in other parts of the globe. It is applied to small societies, not exceeding, perhaps, two or three hundred persons, but occupying provinces greater than some kingdoms in Europe. The country of Guiana, though of larger extent than the kingdom of France, and divided among a greater number of nations, did not contain above twenty-five thousand inhabitants." In the provinces which border on the Orinoco, one may travel several hundred miles in different directions without finding a single hut, or observing the footsteps of a human creature."[‡] In North America, where the climate is more rigorous, and the soil less fertile, the desolation is still greater. There, journeys of some hundred leagues have been made through uninhabited plains and forests.[§] As

[†] Lozano Descrip. del Gran Chaco, 59. 62. Fernandez Relac. Hist. de los Chequit. 162.

[‡] Voyages de Marchais, iv. 353.

[§] Gumilla, ii. 101.

^{*} M. Fabry, quoted by Buffon, iii. 448. Lafitau, ii. 179. Bossu, Travels through Louisiana, i. 111. See Note.VII.

long as hunting continues to be the chief employment of man, to which he trusts for subsistence, he can hardly be said to have occupied the earth.'

2. Nations which depend upon hunting are, Unacquainted with the idea of property. in a great measure, strangers to the idea of property. As the animals on which the hunter feeds are not bred under his inspection, nor nourished by his care, he can claim no right to them; while they run wild in the forest. Where game is so plentiful that it may be caught with little trouble, men never dream of appropriating what is of small value, or of easy acquisition. Where it is so rare, that the labour or danger of the chase requires the united efforts of a tribe, or village, what is killed is a common stock, belonging equally to all, who, by their skill or their courage, have contributed to the success of the excursion. The forest or hunting-grounds, are deemed the property of the tribe, from which it has a title to exclude every rival nation. But no individual arrogates a right to any district of these, in preference to his fellow-citizens. They belong alike to all; and thither, as to a general and undivided store, all repair in quest of sustenance. The same principles by which they regulate their chief occupation, extend to that which is subordinate. Even agriculture has not introduced among them a complete idea of property. As the men hunt, the women labour together, and after they have shared the toils of the seed time, they enjoy the harvest in common.* Among some tribes, the increase of their cultivated lands is deposited in a public granary, and divided among them at stated times, according to their wants.† Among others, though they lay up separate stores, they do not acquire such an exclusive right of property, that they

* See Note VIII.

† Dr. Ferguson's Essay, 125.

• Gumilla, i. 265. Brickell, Hist. of N. Carol. 327. See Note IX.

can enjoy superfluity, while those around them suffer want.^b Thus the distinctions arising from the inequality of possessions are unknown. The terms rich or poor enter not into their language, and being strangers to property, they are unacquainted with what is the great object of laws and policy, as well as the chief motive which induced mankind to establish the various arrangements of regular government.^c

High sense of equality and independence. 3. People in this state retain a high sense of equality and independence. Wherever the idea of property is not established, there can be no distinction among men, but what arises from personal qualities. These can be conspicuous only on such occasions as call them forth into exertion. In times of danger, or in affairs of intricacy, the wisdom and experience of age are consulted, and prescribe the measures which ought to be pursued. When a tribe of savages takes the field against the enemies of their country, the warrior of most approved courage leads the youth to the combat.^d If they go forth in a body to the chase, the most expert and adventurous hunter is foremost, and directs their motions. But during seasons of tranquillity and inaction, when there is no occasion to display those talents, all pre-eminence ceases. Every circumstance indicates that all the members of the community are on a level. They are clothed in the same simple garb. They feed on the same plain fare. Their houses and furniture are exactly similar. No distinction can arise from the inequality of possessions. Whatever forms dependence on one part, or constitutes superiority on the other, is unknown.

^b Denys, *Hist. Natur.* ii. 392, 393.

^c P. Martyr, *Decad.* p. 45. Veneg. *Hist. of Californ.* i. 66. Lery, *Navig. in Brasil*, c. 17.

^d Acosta, *Hist. lib.* vi. c. 19. Stadius, *Hist. Brasil*, lib. ii. c. 13. De Bry, p. 110. Biet. 361.

All are freemen, all feel themselves to be such, and assert with firmness the rights which belong to that condition.^e This sentiment of independence is imprinted so deeply in their nature, that no change of condition can eradicate it, and bend their minds to servitude. Accustomed to be absolute masters of their own conduct, they disdain to execute the orders of another; and having never known control, they will not submit to correction.^f Many of the Americans, when they found that they were treated as slaves by the Spaniards, died of grief; many destroyed themselves in despair.^g

Sense of
subordina-
tion im-
perfect.

4. Among people in this state, government can assume little authority, and the sense of civil subordination must remain very imperfect. While the idea of property is unknown, or incompletely conceived; while the spontaneous productions of the earth, as well as the fruits of industry, are considered as belonging to the public stock, there can hardly be any such subject of difference or discussion among the members of the same community, as will require the hand of authority to interpose in order to adjust it. Where the right of separate and exclusive possession is not introduced, the great object of law and jurisdiction does not exist. When the members of a tribe are called into the field, either to invade the territories of their enemies, or to repel their attacks, when they are engaged together in the toil and dangers of the chase, they then perceive that they are part of a political body. They are conscious of their own connexion with the companions in conjunction with whom they act; and they follow and reverence such as excel in conduct and valour. But, during the intervals between such common efforts, they seem

^e Labat. vi. 124. Brickell, Hist. of Carol. 310.

^f See Note X.

^g Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. Vega Conquist. de la Florida, i. 30. ii. 416. Labat. ii. 133. Benzo. Hist. Nov. Orb. lib. iv. c. 25.

scarcely to feel the ties of political union.^b No visible form of government is established. The names of *magistrate* and *subject* are not in use. Every one seems to enjoy his natural independence almost entire. If a scheme of public utility be proposed, the members of the community are left at liberty to choose whether they will or will not assist in carrying it into execution. No statute imposes any service as a duty, no compulsory laws oblige them to perform it. All their resolutions are voluntary, and flow from the impulse of their own minds.¹ The first step towards establishing a public jurisdiction has not been taken in those rude societies. The right of revenge is left in private hands.^k If violence is committed, or blood is shed, the community does not assume the power either of inflicting or of moderating the punishment. It belongs to the family and friends of the person injured or slain to avenge the wrong, or to accept of the reparation offered by the aggressor. If the elders interpose, it is to advise, not to decide, and it is seldom their counsels are listened to; for as it is deemed pusillanimous to suffer an offender to escape with impunity, resentment is implacable and everlasting.¹ The object of government among savages is rather foreign than domestic. They do not aim at maintaining interior order and police by public regulations, or the exertions of any permanent authority, but labour to preserve such union among the members of their tribe, that they may watch the motions of their enemies, and act against them with concert and vigour.

Such was the form of political order established

^b Lozano Descr. del Gran Chaco, 99. Melendez Teforos Verdaderos, ii. 25. See Note XI.

¹ Charlev. Hist. N. France, iii. 266. 268.

^k Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 8.

¹ Charlev. Hist. N. France. iii. 271, 272. Lafit. i. 486. Cassini Hist. de Nuevo Reyno de Granada, 226.

To what
people
those de-
scriptions
apply. among the greater part of the American na-
tions. In this state were almost all the tribes
spread over the provinces extending eastward
of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the St.
Laurence to the confines of Florida. In a similar
condition were the people of Brazil, the inhabitants
of Chili, several tribes in Paraguay and Guiana, and
in the countries which stretch from the mouth of the
Orinoco to the peninsula of Yucatan. Among such
an infinite number of petty associations, there may
be peculiarities which constitute a distinction, and
mark the various degrees of their civilization and im-
provement. But an attempt to trace and enumerate
these would be vain, as they have not been observed
by persons capable of discerning the minute and de-
licate circumstances which serve to discriminate na-
tions resembling one another in their general cha-
racter and features. The description which I have
given of the political institutions that took place
among those rude tribes in America, concerning
which we have received most complete information,
will apply, with little variation, to every people, both
in its northern and southern division, who have ad-
vanced no farther in civilization, than to add some
slender degree of agriculture to fishing and hunting.

Imperfect as those institutions may appear, several
tribes were not so far advanced in their political pro-
gress. Among all those petty nations which trusted
for subsistence entirely to fishing and hunting with-
out any species of cultivation, the union was so in-
complete, and their sense of mutual dependence so
feeble, that hardly any appearance of government or
order can be discerned in their proceedings. Their
wants are few, their objects of pursuit simple, they
form into separate tribes, and act together, from in-
stinct, habit, or conveniency, rather than from any

formal concert and association. To this class belong the Californians, several of the small nations in the extensive country of Paraguay, some of the people on the banks of the Orinoco, and on the river St. Magdalene, in the new kingdom of Granada.^m

Some irregular appearances. But though among these last-mentioned tribes there was hardly any shadow of regular government, and even among those which I first described its authority is slender and confined within narrow bounds, there were, however, some places in America where government was carried far beyond the degree of perfection which seems natural to rude nations. In surveying the political operations of man, either in his savage or civilized state, we discover singular and eccentric institutions, which start as it were from their station, and fly off so wide, that we labour in vain to bring them within the general laws of any system, or to account for them by those principles which influence other communities in a similar situation. Some instances of this occur among those people of America, whom I have included under the common denomination of savage. These are so curious and important that I shall describe them, and attempt to explain their origin.

Particularly in some of the warmer regions. In the New World, as well as in other parts of the globe, cold or temperate countries appear to be the favourite seat of freedom and independence. There the mind, like the body, is firm and vigorous. There men, conscious of their own dignity, and capable of the greatest efforts in asserting it, aspire to independence, and their stubborn spirits stoop with reluctance to the yoke of servitude. In warmer climates, by whose influence the whole frame is so much enervated, that present pleasure is the supreme felicity,

^m Venegas, i. 68. Lettr. Edif. ii. 176. Tello, *Hist. of Parag.* Churchill, vi. 78. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, xiv. 74.

and mere repose is enjoyment, men acquiesce, almost without a struggle, in the dominion of a superior. Accordingly, if we proceed from north to south along the continent of America, we shall find the power of those vested with authority gradually increasing, and the spirit of the people becoming more tame and passive. In Florida, the authority of the sachems, caziques, or chiefs, was not only permanent, but hereditary. They were distinguished by peculiar ornaments, they enjoyed prerogatives of various kinds, and were treated by their subjects with that reverence which people accustomed to subjection

pay to a master.ⁿ Among the Natchez, a powerful tribe now extinct, formerly situated on the banks of the Mississippi, a difference of rank took place, with which the northern tribes were altogether unacquainted. Some families were reputed noble, and enjoyed hereditary dignity. The body of the people was considered as vile, and formed only for subjection. This distinction was marked by appellations which intimated the high elevation of the one state, and the ignominious depression of the other. The former were called *Respectable*; the latter, the *Stinkards*. The great chief, in whom the supreme authority was vested, is reputed to be a being of superior nature, the brother of the sun, the sole object of their worship. They approach this great chief with religious veneration, and honour him as the representative of their deity. His will is a law to which all submit with implicit obedience. The lives of his subjects are so absolutely at his disposal, that if any one has incurred his displeasure, the offender comes with profound humility and offers him his head. Nor does the dominion of the chiefs

ⁿ Cardenas y Cano Ensayo Chronol. à la Hist. de Florida, p. 46. Le Moyne de Morgues Icones Floridæ. Ap. de Bry, p. 1. 4, &c. Charlev. Hist. N. France, iii. 467, 468.

end with their lives; their principal officers, their favourite wives, together with many domestics of inferior rank, are sacrificed at their tombs, that they may be attended in the next world by the same persons who served them in this; and such is the reverence in which they are held, that those victims welcome death with exultation, deeming it a recompense of their fidelity, and a mark of distinction, to be selected to accompany their deceased master." Thus a perfect despotism, with its full train of superstition, arrogance, and cruelty, is established among the Natchez, and by a singular fatality, that people has tasted of the worst calamities incident to polished nations, though they themselves are not far advanced beyond the tribes around them in civility and improvement. In Hispaniola, Cuba, and the
In the islands. larger islands, their caziques or chiefs possessed extensive power. The dignity was transmitted by hereditary right from father to son. Its honours and prerogatives were considerable. Their subjects paid great respect to the caziques, and executed their orders without hesitation or reserve." They were distinguished by peculiar ornaments, and in order to preserve or augment the veneration of the people, they had the address to call in the aid of superstition to uphold their authority. They delivered their mandates as the oracles of heaven, and pretended to possess the power of regulating the seasons, and of dispensing rain or sunshine, according as their subjects stood in need of them.

In Bogota. In some parts of the southern continent, the power of the caziques seems to have been as extensive as in the isles. In Bogota, which is now a province of the new kingdom of Granada, there

* Dumont Memoir. Hist. sur Louisiane, i. 175. Charlev. Hist. N. France, iii. 419, &c. Lettr. Edif. 20. 106. 111.
 p Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 16. lib. iii. c. 44. p. 88. Life of Columb. ch. 32.

was settled a nation, more considerable in number, and more improved in the various arts of life, than any in America except the Mexicans and Peruvians. The people of Bogota subsisted chiefly by agriculture. The idea of property was introduced among them, and its rights, secured by laws, handed down by tradition, and observed with great care.¹ They lived in towns which may be termed large when compared with those in other parts of America. They were clothed in a decent manner, and their houses may be termed commodious, when compared with those of the small tribes around them. The effects of this uncommon civilization were conspicuous. Government had assumed a regular form. A jurisdiction was established, which took cognizance of different crimes, and punished them with rigour. A distinction of ranks was known; their chief, to whom the Spaniards gave the title of monarch, and who merited that name on account of his splendour as well as power, reigned with absolute authority. He was attended by officers of various conditions; he never appeared in public without a numerous retinue; he was carried in a sort of palanquin with much pomp, and harbingers went before him to sweep the road, and strew it with flowers. This uncommon pomp was supported by presents or taxes received from his subjects, to whom their prince was such an object of veneration, that none of them presumed to look him directly in the face, or ever approached him but with an averted countenance.² There were other tribes on the same continent, among which, though far less advanced than the people of Bogota in their progress towards refinement, the freedom and independence, natural to

¹ Piedrahita, *Hist. de las Conquist. del N. Rayno de Gran.* p. 46.

² Herrera, *dec. 6. lib. i. c. 2. lib. v. c. 56.* Piedrahita, *c. 5. p. 25, &c.* Gomara, *Hist. c. 72.*

man in his savage state, was much abridged, and their caziques had assumed extensive authority.

Causes of those irregular appearances. It is not easy to point out the circumstances, or to discover the causes which contributed to introduce and establish among each of those people a form of government so different from that of the tribes around them, and so repugnant to the genius of rude nations. If the persons who had an opportunity of observing them in their original state had been more attentive and more discerning, we might have received information from their conquerors sufficient to guide us in this inquiry. If the transactions of people, unacquainted with the use of letters, were not involved in impenetrable obscurity, we might have derived some information from this domestic source. But as nothing satisfactory can be gathered either from the accounts of the Spaniards, or from their own traditions, we must have recourse to conjectures, in order to explain the irregular appearances in the political state of the people whom I have mentioned. As all those tribes which had lost their native liberty and independence were seated in the Torrid Zone, or in countries approaching to it, the climate may be supposed to have had some influence in forming their minds to that servitude, which seems to be the destiny of man in those regions of the globe. But though the influence of climate, more powerful than that of any other natural cause, is not to be overlooked; that alone cannot be admitted as a solution of the point in question. The operations of men are so complex, that we must not attribute the form which they assume to the force of a single principle or cause. Although despotism be confined in America to the Torrid Zone, and to the warm regions bordering upon it, I have already observed that these countries contain various tribes, some of which possess a high degree of freedom, and

others are altogether unacquainted with the restraints of government. The indolence and timidity peculiar to the inhabitants of the islands, render them so incapable of the sentiments or efforts necessary for maintaining independence, that there is no occasion to search for any other cause of their tame submission to the will of a superior. The subjection of the Natchez, and of the people of Bogota, seems to have been the consequence of a difference in their state from that of the other Americans. They were settled nations, residing constantly in one place. Hunting was not the chief occupation of the former, and the latter seem hardly to have trusted to it for any part of their subsistence. Both had made such progress in agriculture and arts, that the idea of property was introduced in some degree in the one community, and fully established in the other. Among people in this state, avarice and ambition have acquired objects, and have begun to exert their power; views of interest allure the selfish; the desire of pre-eminence excites the enterprising; dominion is courted by both; and passions unknown to man in his savage state prompt the interested and ambitious to encroach on the rights of their fellow-citizens. Motives, with which rude nations are equally unacquainted, induce the people to submit tamely to the usurped authority of their superiors. But even among nations in this state, the spirit of subjects could not have been rendered so obsequious, or the power of rulers so unbounded, without the intervention of superstition. By its fatal influence, the human mind, in every stage of its progress, is depressed, and its native vigour and independence subdued. Whoever can acquire the direction of this formidable engine, is secure of dominion over his species. Unfortunately for the people whose institutions are the subject of inquiry, this power was in the hands of their

chiefs. The caziques of the isles could put what responses they pleased into the mouths of their *Cemis* or gods; and it was by their interposition, and in their name, that they imposed any tribute or burden on their people.^a The same power and prerogative was exercised by the great chief of the Natchez as the principal minister as well as the representative of the Sun, their deity. The respect which the people of Bogota paid to their monarchs was likewise inspired by religion, and the heir apparent of the kingdom was educated in the innermost recess of their principal temple, under such austere discipline, and with such peculiar rites, as tended to fill his subjects with high sentiments concerning the sanctity of his character, and the dignity of his station.^b Thus superstition, which, in the rudest period of society, is either altogether unknown, or wastes its force in childish unmeaning practices, had acquired such an ascendant over those people of America, who had made some little progress towards refinement, that it became the chief instrument of bending their minds to an untimely servitude, and subjected them, in the beginning of their political career, to a despotism hardly less rigorous than that which awaits nations in the last stage of their corruption and decline.

Their art
of war. V. After examining the political institutions of the rude nations in America, the next object of attention is their art of war, or their provision for public security and defence. The small tribes dispersed over America are not only independent and unconnected, but engaged in perpetual hostilities with one another.^c Though mostly strangers to the idea of separate property, vested in any individual, the rudest of the American nations are well acquainted with the rights of each community to its

^a Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3.

^b Piedrahita, p. 27.

^c Ribas Hist. de los Triumf. p. 9.

own domains. This right they hold to be perfect and exclusive, entitling the possessor to oppose the encroachment of neighbouring tribes. As it is of the utmost consequence to prevent them from destroying or disturbing the game in their hunting grounds, they guard this national property with a jealous attention. But as their territories are extensive, and the boundaries of them not exactly ascertained, innumerable subjects of dispute arise, which seldom terminate without bloodshed. Even in this simple and primitive state of society, interest is a source of discord, and often prompts savage tribes to take arms, in order to repel or punish such as encroach on the forests or plains, to which they trust for subsistence.

Their motives for engaging in war.

But interest is not either the most frequent or the most powerful motive of the incessant hostilities among rude nations. These must be imputed to the passion of revenge, which rages with such violence in the breast of savages, that eagerness to gratify it may be considered as the distinguishing characteristic of men in their uncivilized state. Circumstances of powerful influence, both in the interior government of rude tribes, and in their external operations against foreign enemies, concur in cherishing and adding strength to a passion fatal to the general tranquillity. When the right of redressing his own wrongs is left in the hands of every individual, injuries are felt with exquisite sensibility, and vengeance exercised with unrelenting rancour. No time can obliterate the memory of an offence, and it is seldom that it can be expiated but by the blood of the offender. In carrying on their public wars, savage nations are influenced by the same ideas, and animated with the same spirit, as in prosecuting private vengeance. In small communities, every man is touched with the injury or affront offered to the body of which he is a member,

From the spirit of vengeance.

as if it were a personal attack upon his own honour or safety. The desire of revenge is communicated from breast to breast, and soon kindles into rage. As feeble societies can take the field only in small parties, each warrior is conscious of the importance of his own arm, and feels that to it is committed a considerable portion of the public vengeance. War, which between extensive kingdoms is carried on with little animosity, is prosecuted by small tribes with all the rancour of a private quarrel. The resentment of nations is as implacable as that of individuals. It may be dissembled or suppressed, but is never extinguished; and often, when least expected or dreaded, it bursts out with redoubled fury.^v When polished nations have obtained the glory of victory, or have acquired an addition of territory, they may terminate a war with honour. But savages are not satisfied until they extirpate the community which is the object of their hatred. They fight, not to conquer, but to destroy. If they engage in hostilities, it is with a resolution never to see the face of the enemy in peace, but to prosecute the quarrel with immortal enmity.^w The desire of vengeance is the first, and almost the only principle, which a savage instils into the minds of his children.^x This grows up with him as he advances in life; and as his attention is directed to few objects, it acquires a degree of force unknown among men whose passions are dissipated and weakened by the variety of their occupations and pursuits. The desire of vengeance, which takes possession of the heart of savages, resembles the instinctive rage of an animal, rather than the passion of a man. It turns,

Hence the
ferocity of
their wars,

^v Boucher Hist. Nat. de N. France, p. 93. Charlev. Hist. de N. France, iii. 215. 251. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 204. Creux. Hist. Canad. p. 72. Lozano Descr. del Gran Chaco, 25. Hennep. Mœurs des Sauv. 40.

^w Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 251. Colden, i. 108. ii. 126. Barrere, p. 170. 173.

^x Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 326. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 236. Lozano Hist. de Parag. i. 114.

with undiscerning fury, even against inanimate objects. If hurt accidentally by a stone, they often seize it in a transport of anger, and endeavour to wreak their vengeance upon it.⁷ If struck with an arrow in a battle, they will tear it from the wound, break and bite it with their teeth, and dash it on the ground.² With respect to their enemies, the rage of vengeance knows no bounds. When under the dominion of this passion, man becomes the most cruel of all animals. He neither pities, nor forgives, nor spares.

The force of this passion is so well understood by the Americans themselves, that they always apply to it, in order to excite their people to take arms. If the elders of any tribe attempt to rouse their youth from sloth, if a chief wishes to allure a band of warriors to follow him in invading an enemy's country, the most persuasive topics of their martial eloquence are drawn from revenge. "The bones of our countrymen," say they, "lie uncovered; their bloody bed has not been washed clean. Their spirits cry against us; they must be appeased. Let us go and devour the people by whom they were slain. Sit no longer inactive upon your mats; lift the hatchet, console the spirits of the dead, and tell them that they shall be avenged."^a

And their perpetuity. Animated with such exhortations, the youth snatch their arms in a transport of fury, raise the song of war, and burn with impatience to imbrue their hands in the blood of their enemies. Private chiefs often assemble small parties, and invade a hostile tribe, without consulting the rulers of the community. A single warrior, prompted by caprice or revenge, will take the field alone, and march several hundred miles to surprise and cut off a strag-

⁷ Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 190.

² Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 208. Herrera, dec. i. lib. vi. c. 8.

^a Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 216, 217. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 204.

gling enemy.^b The exploits of a noted warrior, in such solitary excursions, often form the chief part in the history of an American campaign;^c and their elders connive at such irregular sallies, as they tend to cherish a martial spirit, and accustom their people to enterprise and danger.^d But when a war is national, and undertaken by public authority, the deliberations are formal and slow. The elders assemble, they deliver their opinion in solemn speeches, they weigh with maturity the nature of the enterprise, and balance its beneficial or disadvantageous consequences with no inconsiderable portion of political discernment or sagacity. Their priests and soothsayers are consulted, and sometimes they ask the advice even of their women.^e If the determination be for war, they prepare for it with much ceremony. A leader offers to conduct the expedition, and is accepted. But no man is constrained to follow him; the resolution of the community to commence hostilities imposes no obligation upon any member to take part in the war. Each individual is still master of his own conduct, and his engagement in the service is perfectly voluntary.^f

Mode of
carrying
on war.

The maxims by which they regulate their military operations, though extremely different from those which take place among more civilized and populous nations, are well suited to their own political state, and the nature of the country in which they act. They never take the field in numerous bodies, as it would require a greater effort of foresight and industry, than is usual among savages, to provide for their subsistence, during a march of some hundred miles through dreary forests, or during a long voyage upon their lakes and rivers.

^b See Note XII.

^c See Note XIII.

^d Bossu, i. 140. Lery ap. de Bry, 215. Hennepin Mœurs des Sauv. 41. Lafitau, ii. 169.

^e Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. 215. 268. Biet, 367. 380.

^f Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. 217, 218.

Their armies are not encumbered with baggage or military stores. Each warrior, besides his arms, carries a mat and a small bag of pounded maize, and with these is completely equipped for any service. While at a distance from the enemy's frontier, they disperse through the woods, and support themselves with the game which they kill, or the fish which they catch. As they approach nearer to the territories of the nation which they intend to attack, they collect their troops, and advance with greater caution. Even in their hottest and most active wars, they proceed wholly by stratagem and ambuscade. They place not their glory in attacking their enemies with open force. To surprise and destroy is the greatest merit of a commander, and the highest pride of his followers. War and hunting are their only occupations, and they conduct both with the same spirit and the same arts. They follow the track of their enemies through the forest. They endeavour to discover their haunts, they lurk in some thicket near to these, and, with the patience of a sportsman lying in wait for game, will continue in their station day after day, until they can rush upon their prey when most secure, and least able to resist them. If they meet no straggling party of the enemy, they advance towards their villages, but with such solicitude to conceal their own approach, that they often creep on their hands and feet through the woods, and paint their skins of the same colour with the withered leaves, in order to avoid detection.* If so fortunate as to remain unobserved, they set on fire the enemies' huts in the dead of night, and massacre the inhabitants, as they fly naked and defenceless from the flames. If they hope to effect a retreat without being pursued, they carry off some prison-

* Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 237, 258. Hennep. Mœurs des Sauv. p. 59.

ers, whom they reserve for a more dreadful fate. But if, notwithstanding all their address and precautions, they find that their motions are discovered, that the enemy has taken the alarm, and is prepared to oppose them, they usually deem it most prudent to retire. They regard it as extreme folly to meet an enemy who is on his guard, upon equal terms, or to give battle in an open field. The most distinguished success is a disgrace to a leader, if it has been purchased with any considerable loss of his followers,^b and they never boast of a victory, if stained with the blood of their own countrymen.^c To fall in battle, instead of being reckoned an honourable death, is a misfortune which subjects the memory of a warrior to the imputation of rashness or imprudence.^d

Not owing to any defect of courage. This system of war was universal in America; and the small uncivilized tribes, dispersed through all its different regions and climates, display more craft than boldness in carrying on their hostilities. Struck with this conduct, so opposite to the ideas and maxims of Europeans, several authors contend that it flows from a feeble and dastardly spirit peculiar to the Americans, which is incapable of any generous or manly exertion.^e But when we reflect that many of these tribes, on occasions which call for extraordinary efforts, not only defend themselves with obstinate resolution, but attack their enemies with the most daring courage, and that they possess fortitude of mind superior to the sense of danger or the fear of death, we must ascribe their habitual caution to some other cause than constitutional timidity.^f The number of men in each tribe is so small, the difficulty of rearing new

^b See Note XIV.

^c Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 238. 307. Biet, 381. Lafitau Mœurs des Sauv. ii. 248.

^d Charlev. iii. 376. See Note XV.

^e Recherches Philos. sur les Americ. i. 115. Voyage de March. iv. 410.

^f Lafitau Mœurs des Sauv. ii. 248, 249. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 307.

members amidst the hardships and dangers of savage life so great, that the life of a citizen is extremely precious, and the preservation of it becomes a capital object in their policy. Had the point of honour been the same among the feeble American tribes as among the powerful nations of Europe, had they been taught to court fame or victory in contempt of danger and death, they must have been ruined by maxims so ill adapted to their condition. But wherever their communities are more populous, so that they can act with considerable force, and can sustain the loss of several of their members, without being sensibly weakened, the military operations of the Americans more nearly resemble those of other nations. The Brazilians, as well as the tribes situated upon the banks of the river De la Plata, often take the field in such numerous bodies, as deserve the name of armies.ⁿ They defy their enemies to the combat, engage in regular battles, and maintain the conflict with that desperate ferocity, which is natural to men who, having no idea of war but that of exterminating their enemies, never give or take quarter.^o In the powerful empires of Mexico and Peru, great armies were assembled, frequent battles were fought, and the theory as well as practice of war were different from what took place in those petty societies which assume the name of nations.

But though vigilance and attention are the qualities chiefly requisite, where the object of war is to deceive and to surprise; and though the Americans, when acting singly, display an amazing degree of address in concealing their own motions, and discovering those of an enemy, yet it is remarkable that, when they take the field in parties, they can seldom be brought to observe the precautions most essential to their own security. Such is

Incapable
of order or
discipline.

ⁿ Fabri Veriss. Descript. Indiæ ap. de Bry, vii. p. 42.

^o See Note XVI.

the difficulty of accustoming savages to subordination, or to act in concert ; such is their impatience under restraint, and such their caprice and presumption, that it is rarely they can be brought to conform themselves to the counsels and directions of their leaders. They never station sentinels around the place where they rest at night, and after marching some hundred miles to surprise an enemy, are often surprised themselves, and cut off, while sunk in as profound sleep as if they were not within reach of danger.^p

If, notwithstanding this negligence and security, which often frustrate their most artful schemes, they catch the enemy unprepared, they rush upon them with the utmost ferocity, and tearing off the scalps of all those who fall victims to their rage,^q they carry home those strange trophies in triumph. These they preserve as monuments, not only of their own prowess, but of the vengeance which their arm has inflicted upon the people who were objects of public-resentment.^r They are still more solicitous to seize prisoners. During their retreat, if they hope to effect it unmolested, the prisoners are commonly exempt from any insult, and treated with some degree of humanity, though guarded with the most strict attention.

Treatment
of pri-
soners. But after this temporary suspension, the rage of the conquerors rekindles with new fury. As soon as they approach their own frontier, some of their number are dispatched to inform their countrymen with respect to the success of the expedition. Then the prisoners begin to feel the wretchedness of their condition. The women of the village, together with the youth who have not attained to the age of bearing arms, assemble, and

^p Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 236, 237. Lettr. Edif. 17. 508. 20. 130. Laßt. Mœurs, 247. Lahontan, ii. 176.

^q See Note XVII.

^r Laßt. Mœurs, ii. 256.

forming themselves into two lines, through which the prisoners must pass, beat and bruise them with sticks or stones in a cruel manner.* After this first gratification of their rage against their enemies, follow lamentations for the loss of such of their own countrymen as have fallen in the service, accompanied with words and actions which seem to express the utmost anguish and grief. But in a moment, upon a signal given, their tears cease; they pass, with a sudden and unaccountable transition, from the depths of sorrow to the transports of joy; and begin to celebrate their victory with all the wild exultation of a barbarous triumph.† The fate of the prisoners remains still undecided. The old men deliberate concerning it. Some are destined to be tortured to death, in order to satiate the revenge of the conquerors; some to replace the members which the community has lost in that or former wars. They who are reserved for this milder fate, are led to the huts of those whose friends have been killed. The women meet them at the door, and if they receive them, their sufferings are at an end. They are adopted into the family, and according to their phrase, are seated upon the mat of the deceased. They assume his name, they hold the same rank, and are treated thenceforward with all the tenderness due to a father, a brother, a husband, or a friend. But if, either from caprice or an unrelenting desire of revenge, the women of any family refuse to accept of the prisoner who is offered to them, his doom is fixed. No power can then save him from torture and death.

Their indifference concerning their fate. While their lot is in suspense, the prisoners themselves appear altogether unconcerned about what may befall them. They talk, they eat, they sleep, as if they were perfectly at ease, and no danger impending. When the fatal sentence is

* Lahontan, ii. 184. † Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 241. Lafitau, Mœurs, ii. 264.

intimated to them, they receive it with an unaltered countenance, raise their death-song, and prepare to suffer like men. Their conquerors assemble as to a solemn festival, resolved to put the fortitude of the captive to the utmost proof.

And fortitude under torture.

A scene ensues, the bare description of which is enough to chill the heart with horror, wherever men have been accustomed, by milder institutions, to respect their species, and to melt into tenderness at the sight of human sufferings. The prisoners are tied naked to a stake, but so as to be at liberty to move round it. All who are present, men, women, and children, rush upon them like furies. Every species of torture is applied that the rancour of revenge can invent. Some burn their limbs with red-hot irons, some mangle their bodies with knives, others tear their flesh from their bones, pluck out their nails by the roots, and rend and twist their sinews. They vie with one another in refinement of torture. Nothing sets bounds to their rage but the dread of abridging the duration of their vengeance by hastening the death of the sufferers; and such is their cruel ingenuity in tormenting, that, by avoiding industriously to hurt any vital part, they often prolong this scene of anguish for several days. In spite of all that they suffer, the victims continue to chant their death-song with a firm voice, they boast of their own exploits, they insult their tormentors for their want of skill in avenging their friends and relations, they warn them of the vengeance which awaits them on account of what they are now doing, and excite their ferocity by the most provoking reproaches and threats. To display undaunted fortitude in such dreadful situations, is the noblest triumph of a warrior. To avoid the trial by a voluntary death, or to shrink under it, is deemed infamous and cowardly. If any one betray symptoms of timidity, his tor-

mentors often dispatch him at once with contempt, as unworthy of being treated like a man." Animated with those ideas, they endure, without a groan, what it seems almost impossible that human nature should sustain. They appear to be not only insensible of pain, but to court it. "Forbear," said an aged chief of the Iroquois, when his insults had provoked one of his tormentors to wound him with a knife, "forbear these stabs of your knife, and rather let me die by fire, that those dogs, your allies, from beyond the sea, may learn by my example to suffer like men."^w This magnanimity, of which there are frequent instances among the American warriors, instead of exciting admiration, or calling forth sympathy, exasperates the fierce spirit of their torturers to fresh acts of cruelty.* Weary, at length, of contending with men, whose constancy of mind they cannot vanquish, some chief, in a rage, puts a period to their sufferings, by dispatching them with his dagger or club.^y

Sometimes eat their prisoners. This barbarous scene is often succeeded by one no less shocking. As it is impossible to appease the fell spirit of revenge which rages in the heart of a savage, this frequently prompts the Americans to devour those unhappy persons, who have been the victims of their cruelty. In the ancient world, tradition has preserved the memory of barbarous nations of cannibals, who fed on human flesh. But in every part of the New World there were people to whom this custom was familiar. It prevailed in the southern continent,^z in several of the islands,^a and in various districts of North America.^b

* De la Potherie, ii. 237, iii. 48.

^w Colden, Hist. of Five Nations, i. 200.

^y Voyages de Lahont, i. 236.

^z Charlev. Hist. N. Fran. iii. 243, &c. 385. Lafitau Mœurs, ii. 265. Creuxij. Hist. Canad. p. 73. Hennep. Mœurs des Sauv. p. 64, &c. Lahont. i. 233, &c. Tertre, ii. 405. De la Potherie, ii. 22, &c.

^a Stadius ap. de Bry, iii. 123. Lery, ibid. 210. Biet. 384. Lettr. Edif. 23. 341. Piso, 8. Condani, 84. 97. Ribas, Hist. de los Triumph. 473.

^z Life of Columb. 529. Mart. Dec. p. 18. Tertre, ii. 405.

^b Dumont, Mem. i. 254. Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. i. 259, ii. 14, iii. 21. De la Potherie, iii. 50.

Even in those parts, where circumstances, with which we are unacquainted, had in a great measure abolished this practice, it seems formerly to have been so well known, that it is incorporated into the idiom of their language. Among the Iroquois, the phrase by which they express their resolution of making war against an enemy is, "Let us go and eat that nation." If they solicit the aid of a neighbouring tribe, they invite it to "eat broth made of the flesh of their enemies."^c Nor was the practice peculiar to rude unpolished tribes; the principle from which it took rise is so deeply rooted in the minds of the Americans, that it subsisted in Mexico, one of the civilized empires in the New World, and relics of it may be discovered among the more mild inhabitants of Peru. It was not scarcity of food, as some authors imagine, and the importunate cravings of hunger, which forced the Americans to those horrid repasts on their fellow-creatures. Human flesh was never used as common food in any country, and the various relations concerning people who reckoned it among the stated means of subsistence, flow from the credulity and mistakes of travellers. The rancour of revenge first prompted men to this barbarous action.^d The fiercest tribes devoured none but prisoners taken in war, or such as they regarded as enemies.^e Women and children who were not the objects of enmity, if not cut off in the fury of their first inroad into a hostile country, seldom suffered by the deliberate effects of their revenge.^f

The people of South America gratify their revenge, in a manner somewhat different, but with no less unrelenting rancour. There, prisoners, after meeting

^c Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iiii. 208, 209. Lettr. Edif. 23. p. 277. De la Potherie, ii. 298. See Note XVIII.

^d Biet, 383. Blanco, Conversion de Piritu, p. 28. Bancroft, Nat. Hist. of Guiana, p. 259, &c. ^e See Note XIX.

^f Biet, 382. Baudini, Vita di Americo, 84. Tertre, 405. Fermin. Descrip. de Surin. i. 54.

at their first entrance with the same rough reception as among the North Americans,^a are not only exempt from injury, but treated with the greatest kindness. They are feasted and caressed, and some beautiful young women are appointed to attend and solace them. It is not easy to account for this part of their conduct, unless we impute it to a refinement in cruelty. For, while they seem studious to attach the captives to life, by supplying them with every enjoyment that can render it agreeable, their doom is irrevocably fixed. On a day appointed, the victorious tribe assembles, the prisoner is brought forth with great solemnity, he views the preparations for the sacrifice with as much indifference as if he himself were not the victim, and, meeting his fate with undaunted firmness, is dispatched with a single blow. The moment he falls, the women seize the body, and dress it for the feast. They besmear their children with the blood, in order to kindle in their bosoms a hatred of their enemies, which is never extinguished, and all join in feeding upon the flesh with amazing greediness and exultation.^b To devour the body of a slaughtered enemy, they deem the most complete and exquisite gratification of revenge. Wherever this practice prevails, captives never escape death, but they are not tortured with the same cruelty as among tribes which are less accustomed to such horrid feasts.^c

As the constancy of every American warrior may be put to such severe proof, the great object of military education and discipline in the New World is to form the mind to sustain it. When nations carry on war with open force, defy their enemies to the combat, and vanquish them by the superiority of their skill or courage, soldiers are trained to be active, vi-

^a Stadius ap. de Bry, iii. p. 40. 123.

^b Ibid. iii. 128, &c. Lery, ibid. 210.

^c See Note XX.

gorous, and enterprising. But in America, where the genius and maxims of war are extremely different, passive fortitude is the quality in highest estimation. Accordingly, it is early the study of the Americans to acquire sentiments and habits, which will enable them to behave like men, when their resolution shall be put to the proof. As the youth of other nations exercise themselves in feats of activity and force, those of America vie with one another in exhibitions of their patience under sufferings. They harden their nerves by those voluntary trials, and gradually accustom themselves to endure the sharpest pain without complaining. A boy and girl will bind their naked arms together, and place a burning coal between them, in order to try who first discovers such impatience as to shake it off.^k All the trials, customary in America, when a youth is admitted into the class of warriors, or when a warrior is promoted to the dignity of captain or chief, are accommodated to this idea of manliness. They are not displays of valour, but of patience; they are not exhibitions of their ability to offend, but of their capacity to suffer. Among the tribes on the banks of the Orinoco, if a warrior aspires to the rank of captain, his probation begins with a long fast, more rigid than any ever observed by the most abstemious hermit. At the close of this the chiefs assemble, each gives him three lashes with a large whip, applied so vigorously, that his body is almost flayed, and if he betrays the least symptoms of impatience or even sensibility, he is disgraced for ever, and rejected as unworthy of the honour to which he aspires. After some interval, the constancy of the candidate is proved by a more excruciating trial. He is laid in a hammock with his hands bound fast, and an innumerable multitude of venomous ants, whose bite occasions exquisite pain,

^k Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 307.

and produces a violent inflammation, are thrown upon him. The judges of his merit stand around the hammock, and, while these cruel insects fasten upon the most sensible parts of his body, a sigh, a groan, an involuntary motion expressive of what he suffers, would exclude him for ever from the rank of captain. Even after this evidence of his fortitude, it is not deemed to be completely ascertained, but must stand another test more dreadful than any he has hitherto undergone. He is again suspended in his hammock, and covered with leaves of the palmetto. A fire of stinking herbs is kindled underneath, so as he may feel its heat, and be involved in its smoke. Though scorched and almost suffocated, he must continue to endure with the same patient insensibility. Many perish in this rude essay of their firmness and courage, but such as go through it with applause, receive the ensigns of their new dignity with much solemnity, and are ever after regarded as leaders of approved resolution, whose behaviour, in the most trying situations, will do honour to their country.¹ In North America, the previous trial of a warrior is neither so formal, nor so severe. Though, even there, before a youth is permitted to bear arms, his patience and fortitude are proved by blows, by fire, and by insults, more intolerable to a haughty spirit than both.^m

The amazing steadiness with which the Americans endure the most exquisite torments, has induced some authors to suppose that, from the peculiar feebleness of their frame, their sensibility is not so acute as that of other people; as women, and persons of a relaxed habit, are observed to be less affected with pain than robust men, whose nerves are more firmly braced. But the constitution of the Americans is not so different, in its texture, from that of the rest of the

¹ Gumilla, ii. 286, &c. Bict. 376, &c.

^m Charlev, Hist. N. Fr. iii. 219.

human species, as to account for this diversity in their behaviour. It flows from a principle of honour, instilled early and cultivated with such care, as to inspire man in his rudest state with an heroic magnanimity, to which philosophy hath endeavoured, in vain, to form him, when more highly improved and polished. This invincible constancy he has been taught to consider as the chief distinction of a man, and the highest attainment of a warrior. The ideas which influence his conduct, and the passions which take possession of his heart, are few. They operate of course with more decisive effect, than when the mind is crowded with a multiplicity of objects, or distracted by the variety of its pursuits; and when every motive that acts with any force in forming the sentiments of a savage, prompts him to suffer with dignity, he will bear what might seem to be impossible for human patience to sustain. But wherever the fortitude of the Americans is not roused to exertion by their ideas of honour, their feelings of pain are the same with those of the rest of mankind.^a Nor is that patience under sufferings for which the Americans have been so justly celebrated, a universal attainment. The constancy of many of the victims is overcome by the agonies of torture. Their weakness and lamentations complete the triumph of their enemies, and reflect disgrace upon their own country.^o

Wasted by
their per-
petual
wars.

The perpetual hostilities carried on among the American tribes are productive of very fatal effects. Even in seasons of public tranquillity, their imperfect industry does not supply them with any superfluous store of provisions; but when the irruption of an enemy desolates their cultivated lands, or disturbs them in their hunting excursions, such a calamity reduces a community, naturally improvident and destitute of resources, to

^a See Note XXI. ^o Charley. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 248. 385. De la Potherie, iii. 48.

extreme want. All the people of the district that is invaded, are frequently forced to take refuge in woods or mountains, which can afford them little subsistence, and where many of them perish. Notwithstanding their excessive caution in conducting their military operations, and the solicitude of every leader to preserve the lives of his followers, as the rude tribes in America seldom enjoy any interval of peace, the loss of men among them is considerable in proportion to the degree of population. Thus famine and the sword combine in thinning their numbers. All their communities are feeble, and nothing now remains of several nations, which were once considerable, but the name.^p

Recruit
their num-
bers by
adopting
prisoners. Sensible of this continual decay, there are tribes which endeavour to recruit their national force when exhausted, by adopting prisoners taken in war, and by this expedient prevent their total extinction. The practice, however, is not universally received. Resentment operates more powerfully among savages, than considerations of policy. Far the greater part of their captives was anciently sacrificed to their vengeance, and it is only since their numbers began to decline fast, that they have generally adopted milder maxims. But such as they do naturalize, repounce for ever their native tribe, and assume the manners as well as passions of the people by whom they are adopted,^q so entirely, that they often join them in expeditions against their own countrymen. Such a sudden transition, and so repugnant to one of the most powerful instincts implanted by nature, would be deemed strange among many people; but among the members of small communities, where national enmity is violent and deep-rooted, it has the appear-

^p Charley. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 202, 203. 429. Gumilla, ii. 227, &c.

^q Charley. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 245, &c. Laft. ii. 308.

ance of being still more unaccountable. It seems, however, to result naturally from the principles upon which war is carried on in America. When nations aim at exterminating their enemies, no exchange of prisoners can ever take place. From the moment one is made a prisoner, his country and his friends consider him as dead.¹ He has incurred indelible disgrace by suffering himself to be surprised or to be taken by an enemy; and were he to return home, after such a stain upon his honour, his nearest relations would not receive or even acknowledge that they knew him.² Some tribes were still more rigid, and if a prisoner returned, the infamy which he had brought on his country was expiated, by putting him instantly to death.³ As the unfortunate captive is thus an outcast from his own country, and the ties which bound him to it are irreparably broken, he feels less reluctance in forming a new connexion with people, who, as an evidence of their friendly sentiments, not only deliver him from a cruel death, but offer to admit him to all the rights of a fellow-citizen. The perfect similarity of manners among savage nations facilitates and completes the union, and induces a captive to transfer not only his allegiance, but his affection, to the community into the bosom of which he is received.

But though war be the chief occupation of men in their rude state, and to excel in it their highest distinction and pride, their inferiority is always manifest when they engage in competition with polished nations. Destitute of that foresight which discerns and provides for remote events, strangers to the union and mutual confidence requisite in forming any extensive plan of operations, and incapable of the subordination no less requisite

Their inferiority in war to polished nations.

¹ See Note XXII.

² Lahont, ii. 185, 186.

³ Herreza, dec. iii. lib. iv. c. 16. p. 173.

in carrying such plans into execution, savage nations may astonish a disciplined enemy by their valour, but seldom prove formidable to him by their conduct; and whenever the contest is of long continuance, must yield to superior art.^a The empires of Peru and Mexico, though their progress in civilization, when measured by the European or Asiatic standards, was inconsiderable, acquired such an ascendancy over the rude tribes around them, that they subjected most of them with great facility to their power. When the people of Europe overran the various provinces of America, this superiority was still more conspicuous. Neither the courage nor number of the natives could repel a handful of invaders. The alienation and enmity, prevalent among barbarians, prevented them from uniting in any common scheme of defence, and while each tribe fought separately, all were subdued.

VI. The arts of rude nations unacquainted with the use of metals, hardly merit any attention on their own account, but are worthy of some notice, as far as they serve to display the genius and manners of man in this stage of his progress. The first distress a savage must feel, will arise from the manner in which his body is affected, by the heat, or cold, or moisture, of the climate under which he lives; and his first care will be to provide some covering for his own defence. In the warmer and more mild climates of America, none of the rude tribes were clothed. To most of them nature had not even suggested any idea of impropriety in being altogether uncovered.^w As under a mild climate there was little need of any defence from the injuries of the air, and their extreme indolence shunned every species of labour to which it was not urged by absolute necessity, all the inhabitants of the isles, and a

Their arts.

Dress and ornaments.

^a See Note XXII.

^w Lery Navigat. ap. de Bry, iii. p. 164. Life of Columbus, c. 24. Venegas Hist. of Californ. p. 70.

considerable part of the people on the continent, remained in this state of naked simplicity. Others were satisfied with some slight covering, such as decency required. But though naked, they were not unadorned. They dressed their hair in many different forms. They fastened bits of gold, or shells, or shining stones, in their ears, their noses, and cheeks.* They stained their skins with a great variety of figures; and they spent much time, and submitted to great pain, in ornamenting their persons in this fantastic manner. Vanity, however, which finds endless occupation for ingenuity and invention, in nations where dress has become a complex and intricate art, is circumscribed within so narrow bounds, and confined to so few articles among naked savages, that they are not satisfied with those simple decorations, and have a wonderful propensity to alter the natural form of their bodies, in order to render it (as they imagine) more perfect and beautiful. This practice was universal among the rudest of the American tribes. Their operations for that purpose begin as soon as an infant is born. By compressing the bones of the skull, while still soft and flexible, some flatten the crown of their heads; some squeeze them into the shape of a cone; others mould them as much as possible into a square figure;† and they often endanger the lives of their posterity by their violent and absurd efforts to derange the plan of nature, or to improve upon her designs. But in all their attempts either to adorn or to new-model their persons, it seems to have been less the object of the Americans to please, or to appear beautiful, than to give an air of dignity and terror to their aspect. Their attention to dress had more reference to war than to gallantry.

* Lery ap. de Bry, iii. p. 165. Lettr. Édifiées, 20. 223.

† Oviedo Hisp. lib. iii. c. 5. Ulloa, i. 329. Voyage de Labat. ii. 72. Charlev. iii. 323. Gumilla, i. 197, &c. Acugna Relat. de la Riv. des Amaz. ii. 83. Lawsons Voyage to Carolina, p. 33.

The difference in rank and estimation between the two sexes was so great, as seems to have extinguished, in some measure, their solicitude to appear mutually amiable. The man deemed it beneath him to adorn his person, for the sake of one on whom he was accustomed to look down as a slave. It was when the warrior had in view to enter the council of his nation, or to take the field against its enemies, that he assumed his choicest ornaments, and decked his person with the nicest care.^a The decorations of the women were few and simple; whatever was precious or splendid was reserved for the men. In several tribes the women were obliged to spend a considerable part of their time every day in adorning and painting their husbands, and could bestow little attention upon ornamenting themselves. Among a race of men so haughty as to despise, or so cold as to neglect them, the women naturally became careless and slovenly, and the love of finery and show, which has been deemed their favourite passion, was confined chiefly to the other sex.^a To deck his person was the distinction of a warrior, as well as one of his most serious occupations.^b In one part of their dress, which, at first sight, appears the most singular and capricious, the Americans have discovered considerable sagacity in providing against the chief inconveniences of their climate, which is often sultry and moist to excess. All the different tribes, which remain unclothed, are accustomed to anoint and rub their bodies with the grease of animals, with viscous gums, and with oils of different kinds. By this they check that profuse perspiration, which, in the torrid zone, wastes the vigour of the frame, and abridges

^a Wafer's *Voyage*, p. 142. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 167. Charlev. *Hist. N. Fran.* iii. 216, 222.

^a Charlev. *Hist. de la Nouv. France*, iii. 278, 327. Lafitan, ii. 53. Kalm's *Voyage*, iii. 273. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 169, 170. Purch. *Pilgr.* iv. 1287. Ribas *Hist. de los Triunfos &c.* 472.

^b See Note XXIV.

the period of human life. By this, too, they provide a defence against the extreme moisture during the rainy season.^c They likewise, at certain seasons, temper paint of different colours with those unctuous substances, and bedaub themselves plentifully with that composition. Sheathed with this impenetrable varnish, their skins are not only protected from the penetrating heat of the sun, but as all the innumerable tribes of insects have an antipathy to the smell or taste of that mixture, they are delivered from their teasing persecution, which amidst forests and marshes, especially in the warmer regions, would have been altogether intolerable in a state of perfect nakedness.^d

Habitations. The next object to dress that will engage the attention of a savage, is to prepare some habitation which may afford him shelter by day, and a retreat at night. Whatever is connected with his ideas of personal dignity, whatever bears any reference to his military character, the savage warrior deems an object of importance. Whatever relates only to peaceable and inactive life, he views with indifference. Hence, though finically attentive to dress, he is little solicitous about the elegance or disposition of his habitation. Savage nations, far from that state of improvement, in which the mode of living is considered as a mark of distinction, and unacquainted with those wants, which require a variety of accommodation, regulate the construction of their houses according to their limited ideas of necessity. Some of the American tribes were so extremely rude, and had advanced so little beyond the primeval simplicity of nature, that they had no houses at all. During the day, they take shelter from the scorching rays of the sun under thick trees; at night they form

^c See Note XXV.

^d Labat. ii. 73. Gumilla, i. 190. 202. Bancroft Nat. Hist. of Guiana, 81. 280.

a shed with their branches and leaves.* In the rainy season they retire into coves, formed by the hand of nature, or hollowed out by their own industry.^f Others, who have no fixed abode, and roam through the forest in quest of game, sojourn in temporary huts, which they erect with little labour, and abandon without any concern. The inhabitants of those vast plains, which are deluged by the overflowing of rivers during the heavy rains that fall periodically between the tropics, raise houses upon piles fastened in the ground, or place them among the boughs of trees, and are thus safe amidst that wide extended inundation which surrounds them.^g Such were the first essays of the rudest Americans towards providing themselves with habitations. But even among tribes which are more improved, and whose residence is become altogether fixed, the structure of their houses is extremely mean and simple. They are wretched huts, sometimes of an oblong and sometimes of a circular form, intended merely for shelter, with no view to elegance, and little attention to conveniency. The doors are so low that it is necessary to bend or to creep on the hands and feet in order to enter them. They are without windows, and have a large hole in the middle of the roof, to convey out the smoke. To follow travellers in other minute circumstances of their descriptions, is not only beneath the dignity of history, but would be foreign to the object of my researches. One circumstance merits attention, as it is singular, and illustrates the character of the people. Some of their houses are so large as to contain accommodation for fourscore or a hundred persons. These are built for the re-

* See Note XXVI.

^f Lettres Edif. v. 273. Venegas Hist. of Califor. i. 76. Lozano Descrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 55. Lettres Edif. ii. 176. Gumilla, i. 383. Bancroft Nat. Hist. of Guiana, 277.

^g Gumilla, i. 225. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 6. Oviedo Somar. p. 53. C.

ception of different families, which dwell together under the same roof,^a and often around a common fire, without separate apartments, or any kind of screen or partition between the spaces which they respectively occupy. As soon as men have acquired distinct ideas of property; or when they are so much attached to their females, as to watch them with care and jealousy; families of course divide and settle in separate houses, where they can secure and guard whatever they wish to preserve. This singular mode of habitation among several people of America, may therefore be considered not only as the effect of their imperfect notions concerning property, but as a proof of inattention and indifference towards their women. If they had not been accustomed to perfect equality, such an arrangement could not have taken place. If their sensibility had been apt to have taken alarm, they would not have trusted the virtue of their women amidst the temptations and opportunities of such a promiscuous intercourse. At the same time, the perpetual concord which reigns in habitations where so many families are crowded together, is surprising, and affords a striking evidence that they must be people of either a very gentle, or of a very phlegmatic temper, who, in such a situation, are unacquainted with animosity, brawling, and discord.

Their
arms.

After making some provision for his dress and habitation, a savage will perceive the necessity of preparing proper arms with which to assault or repel an enemy. This, accordingly, has early exercised the ingenuity and invention of all rude nations. The first offensive weapons were doubtless such as chance presented, and the first ef-

^a See Note XXVII.

¹ Journ. de Grillet et Bechamel dans la Guyane, p. 65. Laftas Mœurs, ii. 4. Torquem. Monarq. i. 243. Journal Hist. de Joutal, 217. Lory Hist. Brasil, ap. de Bry, iii. 238. Lozano Descr. del Gran Chaco, 67.

forts of art to improve upon these, were extremely awkward and simple. Clubs made of some heavy wood, stakes hardened in the fire, lances whose heads were armed with flint or the bones of some animal, are weapons known to the rudest nations. All these, however, were of use only in close encounter. But men wished to annoy their enemies while at a distance, and the bow and arrow is the most early invention for this purpose. This weapon is in the hands of people, whose advances in improvement are extremely inconsiderable, and is familiar to the inhabitants of every quarter of the globe. It is remarkable, however, that some tribes in America were so destitute of art and ingenuity, that they had not attained to the discovery of this simple invention,^k and seem to have been unacquainted with the use of any missive weapon. The sling, though in its construction not more complex than the bow, and among many nations of equal antiquity, was little known to the people of North America,^l or the islands, but appears to have been used by a few tribes in the southern continent.^m The people, in some provinces of Chili, and those of Patagonia, towards the southern extremity of America, use a weapon peculiar to themselves. They fasten stones, about the size of a fist, to each end of a leather thong of eight feet in length, and swinging these round their heads, throw them with such dexterity, that they seldom miss the object at which they aim.ⁿ

Among people who had hardly any occupation but war or hunting, the chief exertions of their invention,^o as well as industry, were naturally directed towards these objects. With re-

Their
domestic
utensils.

^k Piedrahita Conq. del Nuevo Reyno, ix. 12.

^l Nauf. de Alv. Nun. Cabeza de Vaca, c. x. p. 12.

^m Piedrah. p. 16. See Note XXVIII.

ⁿ Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church, Collect. iii. 82. Falkner's Descript. of Patagon. p. 130.

^o See Note XXIX.

spect to every thing else, their wants and desires were so limited, that their invention was not upon the stretch. As their food and habitations are perfectly simple, their domestic utensils are few and rude. Some of the southern tribes had discovered the art of forming vessels of earthenware, and baking them in the sun, so as they could endure the fire. In North America, they hollowed a piece of hard wood into the form of a kettle, and filling it with water brought it to boil, by putting red-hot stones into it.^p

Dressing
their food.

These vessels they used in preparing part of their provisions; and this may be considered as a step towards refinement and luxury, for men in their rudest state were not acquainted with any method of dressing their victuals but by roasting them on the fire; and among several tribes in America, this is the only species of cookery yet known.^q But

Construc-
tion of their
canoes.

the masterpiece of art, among the savages of America, is the construction of their canoes. An Esquimaux, shut up in his boat of whale-bone, covered with the skins of seals, can brave that stormy ocean, on which the barrenness of his country compels him to depend for the chief part of his subsistence.^r The people of Canada venture upon their rivers and lakes in boats made of the bark of trees, and so light that two men can carry them, wherever shallows or cataracts obstruct the navigation.^s In these frail vessels they undertake and accomplish long voyages.^t The inhabitants of the isles and of the southern continent form their canoes by hollowing the trunk of a large tree, with infinite labour; and though in appearance they are extremely awkward and unwieldy, they paddle and steer them with such dexterity, that Europeans, well acquainted with all the improvements in the science of naviga-

^p Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 332.

^r Ellis Voy. 133.

^s See Note XXXI.

^q See Note XXX.

^t Lefitau Mœurs, &c. li. 213.

tion, have been astonished at the rapidity of their motion, and the quickness of their evolutions. Their *pirogues*, or war-boats, are so large as to carry forty or fifty men; their canoes employed in fishing and in short voyages are less capacious." The form as well as materials of all these various kinds of vessels, is well adapted to the service for which they are destined; and the more minutely they are examined, the mechanism of their structure, as well as neatness of their fabric, will appear the more surprising.

Listlessness But, in every attempt towards industry with which they apply to labour. among the Americans, one striking quality in their character is conspicuous. They apply to work without ardour, carry it on with little activity, and, like children, are easily diverted from it. Even in operations which seem the most interesting, and where the most powerful motives urge them to vigorous exertions, they labour with a languid listlessness. Their work advances under their hand, with such slowness, that an eye-witness compares it to the imperceptible progress of vegetation." They will spend so many years in forming a canoe, that it often begins to rot with age before they finish it. They will suffer one part of a roof to decay and perish, before they complete the other." The slightest manual operation consumes an amazing length of time, and what in polished nations would hardly be an effort of industry, is among savages an arduous undertaking. This slowness of the Americans in executing works of every kind may be imputed to various causes. Among savages, who do not depend for subsistence upon the efforts of regular industry, time is of so little importance, that they set no value upon it; and provided they can finish a design, they never regard how long they are employed about it.

¹ Labat. Voyages, ii. 91, écc. 131.

Gamilla, ii. 297.

² Borde Relat. des Caraïbes, p. 22.

The tools which they employ are so awkward and defective, that every work in which they engage must necessarily be tedious. The hand of the most industrious and skilful artist, were it furnished with no better instrument than a stone hatchet, a shell, or the bone of some animal, would find it difficult to perfect the most simple work. It is by length of labour that he must endeavour to supply his defect of power. But above all, the cold phlegmatic temper peculiar to the Americans renders their operations languid. It is almost impossible to rouse them from that habitual indolence to which they are sunk; and unless when engaged in war or hunting, they seem incapable of exerting any vigorous effort. Their ardour of application is not so great as to call forth that inventive spirit which suggests expedients for facilitating and abridging labour. They will return to a task day after day, but all their methods of executing it are tedious and operose.* Even since the Europeans have communicated to them the knowledge of their instruments, and taught them to imitate their arts, the peculiar genius of the Americans is conspicuous in every attempt they make. They may be patient and assiduous in labour, they can copy with a servile and minute accuracy, but discover little invention and no talents for dispatch. In spite of instruction and example, the spirit of the race predominates; their motions are naturally tardy, and it is in vain to urge them to quicken their pace. Among the Spaniards in America, *the work of an Indian* is a phrase by which they describe any thing, in the execution of which an immense time has been employed, and much labour wasted.

Their religion.

VII. No circumstance respecting rude nations has been the object of greater curiosity

* See Note XXXII.

Voyages de Ullon, I. 335. Lettr. Edif. &c. 15. 348.

than their religious tenets and rites ; and none, perhaps, has been so imperfectly understood, or represented with so little fidelity. **Peculiar difficulties in this inquiry.** Priests and missionaries are the persons who have had the best opportunities of carrying on this inquiry, among the most uncivilized of the American tribes. Their minds, engrossed by the doctrines of their own religion, and habituated to its institutions, are apt to discover something which resembles those objects of their veneration, in the opinions and rites of every people. Whatever they contemplate, they view through one medium, and draw and accommodate it to their own system. They study to reconcile the institutions, which fall under their observation, to their own creed, not to explain them according to the rude notions of the people themselves. They ascribe to them ideas which they are incapable of forming, and suppose them to be acquainted with principles and facts, which it is impossible that they should know. Hence, some missionaries have been induced to believe, that even among the most barbarous nations in America, they had discovered traces, no less distinct than amazing, of their acquaintance with the sublime mysteries and peculiar institutions of Christianity. From their own interpretation of certain expressions and ceremonies, they have concluded that these people had some knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his expiatory sacrifice, of the virtue of the cross,* and of the efficacy of the sacraments.* In such unintelligent and credulous guides, we can place little confidence.

But, even when we make our choice of conductors with the greatest care, we must not follow them with implicit faith. An inquiry into the religious notions

* Venegas, i. 88. 92. Torquemada, ii. 445. Garcia Origen, 122. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. ix. c. 7. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 7.

of rude nations is involved in peculiar intricacies, and we must often pause in order to separate the facts which our informers relate from the reasonings with which they are accompanied, or the theories which they build upon them. Several pious writers, more attentive to the importance of the subject than to the condition of the ^{the} people whose sentiments they were endeavouring to discover, have bestowed much unprofitable labour in researches of this nature.*

Confined
to two
articles.

There are two fundamental doctrines, upon which the whole system of religion, as far as it can be discovered by the light of nature, is established. The one respects the being of a God, the other the immortality of the soul. To discover the ideas of the uncultivated nations under our review with regard to those important points, is not only an object of curiosity, but may afford instruction. To these two articles I shall confine my researches, leaving subordinate opinions, and the detail of local superstitions, to more minute inquirers.

The being
of God.

Whoever has had any opportunity of examining into the religious opinions of persons in the inferior ranks of life, even in the most enlightened and civilized nations, will find that their system of belief is derived from instruction, not discovered by inquiry. That numerous part of the human species, whose lot is labour, whose principal and almost sole occupation is to secure subsistence, views the arrangement and operations of nature with little reflection, and has neither leisure nor capacity for entering into that path of refined and intricate speculation which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of natural religion. In the early and most rude periods of savage life, such disquisitions are altogether unknown. When the intellectual powers are just beginning to unfold, and their first feeble exertions are

* See Note XXXIII.

directed towards a few objects of primary necessity and use; when the faculties of the mind are so limited, as not to have formed abstract or general ideas; when language is so barren, as to be destitute of names to distinguish any thing that is not perceived by some of the senses; it is preposterous to expect that man should be capable of tracing with accuracy the relation between cause and effect; or to suppose that he should rise from the contemplation of the one to the knowledge of the other, and form just conceptions of a Deity, as the Creator and Governor of the universe. The idea of creation is so familiar wherever the mind is enlarged by science, and illuminated with revelation, that we seldom reflect how profound and abstruse this idea is, or consider what progress man must have made in observation and research, before he could arrive at any knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. Accordingly, several tribes have been discovered in America, which have no idea whatever of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worship. Inattentive to that magnificent spectacle of beauty and order presented to their view, unaccustomed to reflect either upon what they themselves are, or to inquire who is the author of their existence, men, in their savage state, pass their days like the animals round them, without knowledge or veneration of any superior power. Some rude tribes have not in their language any name for the Deity, nor have the most accurate observers been able to discover any practice or institution which seemed to imply that they recognised his authority, or were solicitous to obtain his favour.^b It is however only among men in the

^b Hist. 539. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 271. Nieuhoff. Church. Coll. ii. 132. Lett. Edif. 2. 177. Id. 12, 13. Venegas, i. 87. Lozano Descript. del Gran Chaco, 59. Fernand. Mission. de Chequit. 39. Gumilla, ii. 156. Rochefort Hist. des Antilles, p. 468. Margrave Hist. in Append. de Chilienibus, 286. Ulloa Notic. Americ. 335, &c. Barrere, 218, 219. Harcourt Voy. to Guiana, Purch. Pilgr. iv. p. 1273. Account of Brasil, by a Portuguese. Ibid. p. 1289. Jones's Journal, p. 59. See Note XXXIV.

most uncultivated state of nature, and while their intellectual faculties are so feeble and limited as hardly to elevate them above the irrational creation, that we discover this total insensibility to the impressions of any invisible power.

But the human mind, formed for religion, soon opens to the reception of ideas, which are destined, when corrected and refined, to be the great source of consolation amidst the calamities of life. Among some of the American tribes, still in the infancy of improvement, we discern apprehensions of some invisible and powerful beings. These apprehensions are originally indistinct and perplexed, and seem to be suggested rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for blessings received. While Nature holds on her course with uniform and undisturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits resulting from it, without inquiring concerning its cause. But every deviation from this regular course rouses and astonishes them. When they behold events to which they are not accustomed, they search for the reasons of them with eager curiosity. Their understanding is unable to penetrate into these; but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides, without hesitation. It ascribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of invisible beings, and supposes that the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, are effects of their interposition. Some such confused notion of spiritual or invisible power, superintending over those natural calamities which frequently desolate the earth, and terrify its inhabitants, may be traced among many rude nations.* But besides this, the disasters and dangers of savage life are so many, and men often find themselves in situations so formidable, that the mind, sensible of its own weakness, has no resource

* See Note XXXV.

but in the guidance and protection of wisdom and power superior to what is human. Dejected with calamities which oppress him, and exposed to dangers which he cannot repel, the savage no longer relies upon himself; he feels his own impotence, and sees no prospect of being extricated, but by the interposition of some unseen arm. Hence, in all unenlightened nations, the first rites or practices which bear any resemblance to acts of religion, have it for their object to avert evils which men suffer or dread. The *Manitous* or *Okkis* of the North Americans were amulets or charms, which they imagined to be of such virtue, as to preserve the persons who reposed confidence in them from every disastrous event, or they were considered as tutelary spirits, whose aid they might implore in circumstances of distress.^d The *Cemis* of the islanders were reputed by them to be the authors of every calamity that afflicts the human race; they were represented under the most frightful forms, and religious homage was paid to them with no other view than to appease these furious deities.^e Even among those tribes whose religious system was more enlarged, and who had formed some conception of benevolent beings, which delighted in conferring benefits, as well as of malicious powers prone to inflict evil; superstition still appears as the offspring of fear, and all its efforts were employed to avert calamities. They were persuaded that their good deities, prompted by the beneficence of their nature, would bestow every blessing in their power, without solicitation or acknowledgment; and their only anxiety was to soothe and deprecate the wrath of the powers whom they regarded as the enemies of mankind.^f

^d Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 343, &c. Creuxii Hist. Canad. p. 82, &c.

^e Oviedo; lib. iii. c. 1. p. 111. P. Martyr, decad. p. 102, &c.

^f Tertre, ii. 365. Borde, p. 14. State of Virginia, by a Native, book iii. p. 32.
33. Dumont, i. 165. Bancroft Nat. Hist. of Guiana, 309.

Such were the imperfect conceptions of the greater part of the Americans with respect to the interpositions of invisible agents, and such, almost universally, was the mean and illiberal object of their superstitions. Were we to trace back the ideas of other nations to that rude state in which history first presents them to our view, we should discover a surprising resemblance in their tenets and practices; and should be convinced, that, in similar circumstances, the faculties of the human mind hold nearly the same course in their progress, and arrive at almost the same conclusions. The impressions of fear are conspicuous in all the systems of superstition formed in this situation. The most exalted notions of men rise no higher than to a perplexed apprehension of certain beings, whose power, though supernatural, is limited as well as partial.

Remark-
able diver-
sity in
their reli-
gious no-
tions.

But, among other tribes, which have been longer united, or have made greater progress in improvement, we discern some feeble pointing towards more just and adequate conceptions of the power that presides in nature. They seem to perceive that there must be some universal cause to whom all things are indebted for their being. If we may judge by some of their expressions, they appear to acknowledge a divine power to be the maker of the world, and the disposer of all events. They denominate him the *Great Spirit*.^s But these ideas are faint and confused, and when they attempt to explain them, it is manifest, that among them the word *spirit* has a meaning very different from that in which we employ it, and that they have no conception of any deity but what is corporeal. They believe their gods to be of the human form, though of a nature more excellent than man, and retail such wild incoherent fables concerning their functions and

^s Charley. N. Fr. iii. 313. Sagard, Voy. du Pays des Hurons, 245

operations, as are altogether unworthy of a place in history. Even among these tribes, there is no established form of public worship ; there are no temples erected in honour of their deities ; and no ministers peculiarly consecrated to their service. They have the knowledge, however, of several superstitious ceremonies and practices handed down to them by tradition, and to these they have recourse with a childish credulity, when roused by any emergence from their usual insensibility, and excited to acknowledge the power, and to implore the protection of superior beings.^a

System
of the
Natchez.

The tribe of the Natchez, and the people of Bogota, had advanced beyond the other uncultivated nations of America in their ideas of religion, as well as in their political institutions ; and it is no less difficult to explain the cause of this distinction than of that which we have already considered. The sun was the chief object of religious worship among the Natchez. In their temples, which were constructed with some magnificence, and decorated with various ornaments, according to their mode of architecture, they preserved a perpetual fire, as the purest emblem of their divinity. Ministers were appointed to watch and feed this sacred flame. The first function of the great chief of the nation, every morning, was an act of obeisance to the sun ; and festivals returned at stated seasons, which were celebrated by the whole community with solemn but unbloody rites.¹ This is the most refined species of superstition known in America, and, perhaps, one of the most natural as well as most seducing. The sun is the apparent source of the joy, fertility, and life, diffused through nature ; and while the human mind, in its earlier essays towards inquiry, contemplates

^a Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 345. Colden, i. 17.

¹ Dumont, i. 158; &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 417, &c. 429. Laflau, i. 167.

and admires his universal and animating energy, its admiration is apt to stop short at what is visible, without reaching to the unseen cause; and pays that adoration to the most glorious and beneficial work of God, which is due only to him who formed it. As fire is the purest and most active of the elements, and in some of its qualities and effects resembles the sun, it was, not improperly, chosen to be the emblem of his powerful operation. The ancient Persians, a people far superior, in every respect, to that rude tribe whose rites I am describing, founded their religious system on similar principles, and established a form of public worship, less gross and exceptionable than that of any people destitute of guidance from revelation. This surprising coincidence in sentiment between two nations, in such different states of improvement, is one of the many singular and unaccountable circumstances which occur in the history of human affairs.

Among the people of Begota, the sun and moon were, likewise, the chief objects of veneration. Their system of religion was more regular and complete, though less pure, ~~than~~ that of the Natchez. They had temples, altars, priests, sacrifices, and that long train of ceremonies, which superstition introduces wherever she has fully established her dominion over the minds of men. But the rites of their worship were cruel and bloody. They offered human victims to their deities, and many of their practices nearly resembled the barbarous institutions of the Mexicans, the genius of which we shall have an opportunity of considering more attentively in its proper place.

Their ideas
concerning
the im-
mortality
of the soul;

With respect to the other great doctrine of religion, concerning the immortality of the soul, the sentiments of the Americans were more united: the human mind, even when

¹ Piedrahita, Conq. del N. Reyno, p. 17. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. v. c. 6.

least improved and invigorated by culture, shrinks from the thoughts of annihilation, and looks forward with hope and expectation to a state of future existence. This sentiment, resulting from a secret consciousness of its own dignity, from an instinctive longing after immortality, is universal, and may be deemed natural. Upon this, are founded the most exalted hopes of man in his highest state of improvement; nor has nature withheld from him this soothing consolation, in the most early and rude period of his progress. We can trace this opinion from one extremity of America to the other, in some regions more faint and obscure, in others more perfectly developed, but no where unknown. The most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All entertain hopes of a future and more happy state, where they shall be for ever exempt from the calamities which imbitter human life in its present condition. This future state they conceive to be a delightful country, blessed with perpetual spring, whose forests abound with game, whose rivers swarm with fish, where famine is never felt, and uninterrupted plenty shall be enjoyed without labour or toil. But as men, in forming their first imperfect ideas concerning the invisible world, suppose that there they shall continue to feel the same desires, and to be engaged in the same occupations, as in the present world; they naturally ascribe eminence and distinction, in that state, to the same qualities and talents which are here the object of their esteem. The Americans, accordingly, allotted the highest place, in their country of spirits, to the skilful hunter, to the adventurous and successful warrior, and to such as had tortured the greatest number of captives, and devoured their flesh.¹ These notions

¹ Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 222. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 351, &c. De la Potherie, ii. 45, &c. iii. 5.

Induce
them to
bury arms,
&c. with
the dead.

were so prevalent, that they gave rise to a universal custom, which is, at once, the strongest evidence that the Americans believe in a future state, and the best illustration of what they expect there. As they imagine, that departed spirits begin their career anew in the world whither they are gone, that their friends may not enter upon it defenceless and unprovided, they bury together with the bodies of the dead their bow, their arrows, and other weapons used in hunting or war; they deposit in their tombs the skins or stuffs of which they make garments, Indian corn, manioc, venison, domestic utensils, and whatever is reckoned among the necessaries in their simple mode of life.^m In some provinces, upon the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favourites, and of his slaves, were put to death, and interred together with him, that he might appear with the same dignity in his future station, and be waited upon by the same attendants.ⁿ This persuasion is so deep-rooted, that many of the deceased person's retainers offer themselves as voluntary victims, and court the privilege of accompanying their departed master, as a high distinction. It has been found difficult, on some occasions, to set bounds to this enthusiasm of affectionate duty, and to reduce the train of a favourite leader to such a number as the tribe could afford to spare.^o

Supersti-
tion con-
nected
with de-
votion.

Among the Americans, as well as other uncivilized nations, many of the rites and observances which bear some resemblance to acts of religion, have no connexion with devotion,

^m *Chronica de Cieca de Leon*, c. 28. *Sagard*, 288. *Croix. Hist. Canad.* p. 91. *Rocheport, Hist. des Antilles*, 568. *Biet* 391. *De la Potherie*, il. 44. li. 8. *Blanco, Convers. de Pirita*, p. 35.

ⁿ *Dumont Louisiane*, i. 208, &c. *Oviedo*, lib. v. c. 3. *Gomara Hist. Gen.* c. 28. *P. Mart. decad.* 304. *Charlev. N. Fr.* iii. 421. *Herrera*, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3. *P. Melchior Hernandez Memor. de Cherequi. Coll. Orig. Papers*, i. *Chron. de Cieca de Leon*, c. 33.

^o See Note XXXVI.

but proceed from a fond desire of prying into futurity. The human mind is most apt to feel, and to discover this vain curiosity, when its own powers are most feeble and uninformed. Astonished with occurrences, of which it is unable to comprehend the cause, it naturally fancies that there is something mysterious and wonderful in their origin. Alarmed at events of which it cannot discern the issue or the consequences, it has recourse to other means of discovering them, than the exercise of its own sagacity. Wherever superstition is so established as to form a regular system, this desire of penetrating into the secrets of futurity is connected with it. Divination becomes a religious act. Priests, as the ministers of heaven, pretend to deliver its oracles to men. They are the only soothsayers, augurs, and magicians, who profess the sacred and important art of disclosing what is hid from other eyes.

This department belongs to their physicians.

But, among rude nations, who pay no veneration to any superintending power, and who have no established rites or ministers of religion, their curiosity to discover what is future and unknown, is cherished by a different principle, and derives strength from another alliance. As the diseases of men, in the savage state, are (as has been already observed) like those of the animal creation, few but extremely violent, their impatience under what they suffer, and solicitude for the recovery of health, soon inspired them with extraordinary reverence for such as pretended to understand the nature of their maladies, and to be possessed of knowledge sufficient to preserve or deliver them from their sudden and fatal effects. These ignorant pretenders, however, were such utter strangers to the structure of the human frame, as to be equally unacquainted with the causes of its disorders, and the manner in which they will terminate. Superstition,

mingled frequently with some portion of craft, supplied what they wanted in science. They imputed the origin of diseases to supernatural influence, and prescribed or performed a variety of mysterious rites, which they gave out to be of such efficacy as to remove the most dangerous and inveterate maladies. The credulity and love of the marvellous, natural to uninformed men, favoured the deception, and prepared them to be the dupes of those impostors. Among savages, their first physicians are a kind of conjurers or wizards, who boast that they know what is past, and can foretell what is to come. Incantations, sorcery, and mummeries of diverse kinds, no less strange than frivolous, are the means which they employ to expel the imaginary causes of malignity; and, relying upon the efficacy of these, they predict with confidence what will be the fate of their deluded patients. Thus superstition, in its earliest form, flowed from the solicitude of man to be delivered from present distress, not from his dread of evils awaiting him in a future life, and was originally ingrafted on medicine, not on religion. One of the first and most intelligent historians of America, was struck with this alliance between the art of divination and that of physic, among the people of Hispaniola.^a But this was not peculiar to them. The *Alexis*, the *Piayas*, the *Autmoins*, or whatever was the distinguishing name of their diviners and charmers in other parts of America, were all the physicians of their respective tribes, in the same manner as the *Bubitos* of Hispaniola. As their function led them to apply to the human mind when enfeebled by sickness, and as they found it, in that season of dejection, prone to be alarmed with imaginary fears, or amused with vain hopes, they easily induced it to rely with implicit

^a P. Melch. Hernandez, *Memorial de Chiriqui*. Collect. Orig. Pap. i.
A Oviedo, lib. v. c. 1.

confidence on the virtue of their spells, and the certainty of their predictions.*

Gradually
extends.

Whenever men acknowledge the reality of supernatural power and discernment in one instance, they have a propensity to admit it in others. The Americans did not long suppose the efficacy of conjuration to be confined to one subject. They had recourse to it in every situation of danger or distress. When the events of war were peculiarly disastrous, when they met with unforeseen disappointments in hunting, when inundations or drought threatened their crops with destruction, they called upon their conjurers to begin their incantations, in order to discover the causes of those calamities, or to foretell what would be their issue.† Their confidence in this delusive art gradually increased, and manifested itself in all the occurrences of life. When involved in any difficulty, or about to enter upon any transaction of moment, every individual regularly consulted the sorcerer, and depended upon his instructions to extricate him from the former, as well as to direct his conduct in the latter. Even among the rudest tribes in America, superstition appears in this form, and divination is an art in high esteem. Long before man had acquired such knowledge of a deity as inspires reverence, and leads to adoration, we observe him stretching out a presumptuous hand to draw aside that veil with which Providence kindly conceals its purposes from human knowledge; and we find him labouring with fruitless anxiety to penetrate into the mysteries of the divine administration. To discern and to worship a superintending power, is an evidence of the enlargement and maturity of the human

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 4. Osborne, Coll. ii. 860. Dumont, i. 169, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 361. 364, &c. Lawson, N. Carol. 214. Ribas, Triumf. p. 17. Biet, 386. De la Potherie, ii. 35, &c.

† Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 3. Dumont, i. 173. Fernand. Relac. de los Chequit. p. 40. Lozano, 84. Murgrave, 279.

understanding; a vain desire of prying into futurity, is the error of its infancy, and a proof of its weakness.

From this weakness proceeded likewise the faith of the Americans in dreams, their observation of omens, their attention to the chirping of birds, and the cries of animals, all which they suppose to be indications of future events; and if any one of these prognostics is deemed unfavourable, they instantly abandon the pursuit of those measures on which they are most eagerly bent.

Detached customs. VIII. But if we would form a complete idea of the uncultivated nations of America, we must not pass unobserved some singular customs, which, though universal and characteristic, could not be reduced, with propriety, to any of the articles into which I have divided my inquiry concerning their manners.

Love of dancing. Among savages, in every part of the globe, the love of dancing is a favourite passion. As, during a great part of their time, they languish in a state of inactivity and indolence, without any occupation to rouse or interest them, they delight universally in a pastime which calls forth the active powers of their nature into exercise. The Spaniards, when they first visited America, were astonished at the fondness of the natives for dancing, and beheld with wonder a people, cold and unanimated in most of their other pursuits, kindle into life, and exert themselves with ardour, as often as this favourite amusement recurred. Among them, indeed, dancing ought not to be denominated an amusement. It is a serious and important occupation, which mingles in every occurrence of public or private life. If any intercourse be necessary between two American tribes, the ambassadors of the one approach in a solemn

Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 262. 353. Stadius ap. de Bry, iii. 120. Creuxj. Hist. Canad. 84. Techo Hist. of Parag. Church. Coll. vi. 37. De la Petherie, iii. 6.

dance, and present the calumet or emblem of peace; the sachems of the other receive it with the same ceremony." If war is denounced against an enemy, it is by a dance, expressive of the resentment which they feel, and of the vengeance which they meditate.^v If the wrath of their gods is to be appeased, or their beneficence to be celebrated; if they rejoice at the birth of a child, or mourn the death of a friend,^x they have dances appropriated to each of these situations, and suited to the different sentiments with which they are then animated. If a person is indisposed, a dance is prescribed as the most effectual means of restoring him to health; and if he himself cannot endure the fatigue of such an exercise, the physician or conjurer performs it in his name, as if the virtue of his activity could be transferred to his patient.^y

All their dances are imitations of some action; and though the music by which they are regulated is extremely simple and tiresome to the ear by its dull monotony, some of their dances appear wonderfully expressive and animated. The war-dance is, perhaps, the most striking. It is the representation of a complete American campaign. The departure of the warriors from their village, their march into the enemy's country, the caution with which they encamp, the address with which they station some of their party in ambush, the manner of surprising the enemy, the noise and ferocity of the combat, the scalping of those who are slain, the seizing of prisoners, the triumphant return of the conquerors, and the torture of the victims, are successively exhibited. The performers enter with such enthusiastic ardour into their several parts, their gestures, their counte-

^v De la Potherie Hist. ii. 17, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 211. 297. La Hontan, i. 100. 137. Hennepin Decou. 146, &c.

^x Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 298. Laftau, i. 523.

^y Joutel, 343. Gomara Hist. Gen. c. 196.

^z Denys Hist. Nat. 189. Brickell, 372. De la Potherie, ii. 36.

nance, their voice, are so wild and so well adapted to their various situations; that Europeans can hardly believe it to be a mimic scene, or view it without emotions of fear and horror.*

But however expressive some of the American dances may be, there is one circumstance in them remarkable, and connected with the character of the race. The songs, the dances, the amusements of other nations, expressive of the sentiments which animate their hearts, are often adapted to display or excite that sensibility which mutually attaches the sexes. Among some people, such is the ardour of this passion, that love is almost the sole object of festivity and joy; and as rude nations are strangers to delicacy, and unaccustomed to disguise any emotion of their minds, their dances are often extremely wanton and indecent. Such is the *Calenda*; of which the natives of Africa are so passionately fond;† and such the feats of the dancing girls, which the Asiatics contemplate with so much avidity of desire. But, among the Americans, more cold and indifferent to their females, from causes which I have already explained, the passion of love mingles but little with their festivals and pastimes. Their songs and dances are mostly solemn and martial; they are connected with some of the serious and important affairs of life;‡ and having no relation to love or gallantry, are seldom common to the two sexes, but executed by the men and women apart.§ If, on some occasions, the women are permitted to join in the festival, the character of the entertainment is still the same, and no movement or gesture is expressive of attachment, or encourages familiarity.¶

* De la Potherie, ii. 116. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 297. Lafitau, l. 523.

† Adanson Voyage to Senegal, iii. 287. Labat Voyages, iv. 463. Sloane Hist. Nat. of Jam. Introd. p. 48. Fermin Descript. de Surin. i. 139.

‡ Descript. of N. France. Osborne Coll. ii. 883. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 84.

§ Wafer's Account of Isthmus, &c. 169. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 177. Lozano Hist. de Parag. i. 149. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 8. dec. 4. lib. x. c. 4. See Note XXXVII.

¶ Barrere Fr. Equin. p. 191.

Passion for gaming. An immoderate love of play, especially at games of hazard, which seems to be natural to all people unaccustomed to the occupations of regular industry, is likewise universal among the Americans. The same causes, which so often prompt persons in civilized life, who are at their ease, to have recourse to this pastime, render it the delight of the savage. The former are independent of labour, the latter do not feel the necessity of it; and as both are unemployed, they run with transport to whatever is interesting enough to stir and to agitate their minds. Hence the Americans, who at other times are so indifferent, so phlegmatic, so silent, and animated with so few desires, as soon as they engage in play become rapacious, impatient, noisy, and almost frantic, with eagerness. Their furs, their domestic utensils, their clothes, their arms, are staked at the gaming-table, and when all is lost, high as their sense of independence is, in a wild emotion of despair or of hope, they will often risk their personal liberty upon a single cast.^e Among several tribes, such gaming parties frequently recur, and become their most acceptable entertainment at every great festival. Superstition, which is apt to take hold of those passions which are most vigorous, frequently lends its aid to confirm and strengthen this favourite inclination. Their conjurers are accustomed to prescribe a solemn match at play, as one of the most efficacious methods of appeasing their gods, or of restoring the sick to health.^f

And for drinking. From causes similar to those which render them fond of play, the Americans are extremely addicted to drunkenness. It seems to have been one of the first exertions of human ingenuity to discover some composition of an intoxicating qua-

^e Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 261. 318. Lafitau, ii. 338, &c. Ribas Triumf. 13. Brickell. 335.

^f Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 362.

lity; and there is hardly any nation so rude, or so destitute of invention, as not to have succeeded in this fatal research. The most barbarous of the American tribes have been so unfortunate as to attain this art; and even those which are so deficient in knowledge, as to be unacquainted with the method of giving an inebriating strength to liquors by fermentation, can accomplish the same end by other means. The people of the islands of North America, and of California, used, for this purpose, the smoke of tobacco, drawn up with a certain instrument into the nostrils, the fumes of which ascending to the brain, they felt all the transports and frenzy of intoxication.^a In almost every other part of the New World, the natives possessed the art of extracting an intoxicating liquor from maize or the manioc root, the same substances which they convert into bread. The operation by which they effect this, nearly resembles the common one of brewing, but with this difference, that in place of yeast, they use a nauseous infusion of a certain quantity of maize or manioc chewed by their women. The saliva excites a vigorous fermentation, and in a few days the liquor becomes fit for drinking. It is not disagreeable to the taste, and when swallowed in large quantities, is of an intoxicating quality.^b This is the general beverage of the Americans, which they distinguish by various names, and for which they feel such a violent and insatiable desire, as it is not easy either to conceive or describe. Among polished nations, where a succession of various functions and amusements keeps the mind in continual occupation, the desire for strong drink is regulated in a great measure by the climate, and increases or diminishes according to the variations of its temperature. In warm re-

^a Oviedo Hist. ap. Ramus. iii. 113. Venegas, i. 68. Naufrag. de Cabeça de Vaca, cap. 26. See Note XXXVIII.

^b Stadius ap. de Bry, iii. 111. Lery, *ibid.* 175.

gions, the delicate and sensible frame of the inhabitants does not require the stimulation of fermented liquors. In colder countries, the constitution of the natives, more robust and more sluggish, stands in need of generous liquors to quicken and animate it. But among savages, the desire of something that is of power to intoxicate, is in every situation the same. All the people of America, if we except some small tribes near the straits of Magellan, whether natives of the torrid zone, or inhabitants of its more temperate regions, or placed by a harder fate in the severe climates towards its northern or southern extremity, appear to be equally under the dominion of this appetite.¹ Such a similarity of taste, among people in such different situations, must be ascribed to the influence of some moral cause, and cannot be considered as the effect of any physical or constitutional want. While engaged in war or in the chase, the savage is often in the most interesting situations, and all the powers of his nature are roused to the most vigorous exertions. But those animating scenes are succeeded by long intervals of repose, during which the warrior meets with nothing that he deems of sufficient dignity or importance to merit his attention. He languishes and mopes in this season of indolence. The posture of his body is an emblem of the state of his mind. In one climate, cowering over the fire in his cabin; in another, stretched under the shade of some tree, he dozes away his time in sleep, or in an unthinking joyless inactivity, not far removed from it. As strong liquors awake him from this torpid state, give a brisker motion to his spirits, and enliven him more thoroughly than either dancing or gaming, his love of them is excessive. A savage, when not engaged in action, is a pensive melancholy animal;

¹ Gumilla, l. 237. Lozano Descip. del Gran. Chaco, 56: 103. Ribas, 8. Ullon, i. 249. 337. Marchais, iv. 436. Fernandez Mission. de las Cbequit. 35. Barreio, p. 203. Blanco Convera. de Piritu, 31.

but as soon as he tastes, or has a prospect of tasting, the intoxicating draught, he becomes gay and frolicsome.^k Whatever be the occasion or pretext on which the Americans assemble, the meeting always terminates in a debauch. Many of their festivals have no other object, and they welcome the return of them with transports of joy. As they are not accustomed to restrain any appetite, they set no bounds to this. The riot often continues without intermission several days; and whatever may be the fatal effects of their excess, they never cease from drinking as long as one drop of liquor remains. The persons of greatest eminence, the most distinguished warriors, and the chiefs most renowned for their wisdom, have no greater command of themselves than the most obscure members of the community. Their eagerness for present enjoyment renders them blind to its fatal consequences; and those very men, who in other situations seem to possess a force of mind more than human, are in this instance inferior to children, in foresight, as well as consideration, and mere slaves of brutal appetite.^l When their passions, naturally strong, are heightened and inflamed by drink, they are guilty of the most enormous outrages, and the festivity seldom concludes without deeds of violence or bloodshed.^m

But, amidst this wild debauch, there is one circumstance remarkable; the women, in most of the American tribes, are not permitted to partake of it.ⁿ Their province is to prepare the liquor, to serve it about to the guests, and to take care of their husbands and friends, when their reason is overpowered. This exclusion of the women from an enjoyment so highly valued by savages, may be justly considered as a mark of their inferiority, and as an additional evi-

^k Meléndez Tesores Verdad. iii. 369.

^l Ribas, 9. Ulloa, i. 338.

^m Lettr. Edif. ii. 178. Torquemada Mond. Ind. i. 339.

ⁿ See Note XXXIX.

dence of that contempt with which they were treated in the New World. The people of North America, when first discovered, were not acquainted with any intoxicating drink; but as the Europeans early found it their interest to supply them with spirituous liquors, drunkenness soon became as universal among them as among their countrymen to the south; and their women having acquired this new taste, indulge it with as little decency and moderation as the men.*

Put to death the aged and incurable. It were endless to enumerate all the detached customs which have excited the wonder of travellers in America; but I cannot omit one seemingly as singular as any that has been mentioned. When their parents and other relations become old, or labour under any distemper which their slender knowledge of the healing art cannot remove, the Americans cut short their days with a violent hand, in order to be relieved from the burden of supporting and tending them. This practice prevailed among the ruder tribes in every part of the continent, from Hudson's Bay to the river De la Plata; and however shocking it may be to those sentiments of tenderness and attachment, which, in civilized life, we are apt to consider as congenial with our frame, the condition of man in the savage state leads and reconciles him to it. The same hardships and difficulty of procuring subsistence, which deter savages, in some cases, from rearing their children, prompt them to destroy the aged and infirm. The declining state of the one is as helpless as the infancy of the other. The former are no less unable than the latter to perform the functions that belong to a warrior or hunter, or to endure those various distresses in which savages are so often involved, by their own want of foresight and industry. Their relations feel this; and, incapable of attending to the wants or weakness of

* Hutchinson Hist. of Massachusetts. 469. Lafitan, ii. 125. Sagard, 146.

others, their impatience under an additional burden prompts them to extinguish that life which they find it difficult to sustain. This is not regarded as a deed of cruelty, but as an act of mercy. An American, broken with years and infirmities, conscious that he can no longer depend on the aid of those around him, places himself contentedly in his grave; and it is by the hands of his children or nearest relations that the thong is pulled, or the blow inflicted, which releases him for ever from the sorrows of life.^P

General estimate of their character. IX. After contemplating the rude American tribes in such various lights; after taking a view of their customs and manners from so many different stations, nothing remains but to form a general estimate of their character, compared with that of more polished nations. A human being, as he comes originally from the hand of nature, is everywhere the same. At his first appearance in the state of infancy, whether it be among the rudest savages, or in the most civilized nation, we can discern no quality which marks any distinction or superiority. The capacity of improvement seems to be the same; and the talents he may afterward acquire, as well as the virtues he may be rendered capable of exercising, depend, in a great measure, upon the state of society in which he is placed. To this state his mind naturally accommodates itself, and from it receives discipline and culture. In proportion to the wants which it accustoms a human being to feel, and the functions in which these engage him, his intellectual powers are called forth. According to the connexions which it establishes between him and the rest of his species, the affections of his heart are exerted. It is only by attending to this great principle, that we can discover what is the character of man in every different period of his progress.

^P Cassani *Histor. de N. Reyno de Gran.* p. 300. Piso, p. 6. Ellis *Voy.* 191. Gumbell, i. 353.

Intellectual powers.

If we apply it to savage life, and measure the attainments of the human mind in that state by this standard, we shall find, according to an observation which I have already made, that the intellectual powers of man must be extremely limited in their operations. They are confined within the narrow sphere of what he deems necessary for supplying his own wants. Whatever has not some relation to these, neither attracts his attention, nor is the object of his inquiries. But however narrow the bounds may be within which the knowledge of a savage is circumscribed, he possesses thoroughly that small portion which he has attained. It was not communicated to him by formal instruction; he does not attend to it as a matter of mere speculation and curiosity; it is the result of his own observation, the fruit of his own experience, and accommodated to his condition and exigencies. While employed in the active occupations of war or of hunting, he often finds himself in difficult and perilous situations, from which the efforts of his own sagacity must extricate him. He is frequently engaged in measures, where every step depends upon his own ability to decide, where he must rely solely upon his own penetration to discern the dangers to which he is exposed, and upon his own wisdom in providing against them. In consequence of this, he feels the knowledge which he possesses, and the efforts which he makes, and either in deliberation or action rests on himself alone.

Political talents.

As the talents of individuals are exercised and improved by such exertions, much political wisdom is said to be displayed in conducting the affairs of their small communities. The council of old men in an American tribe, deliberating upon its interests, and determining with respect to peace or war, has been compared to the senate in more po-

lished republics. The proceedings of the former, we are told, are often no less formal and sagacious than those of the latter. Great political wisdom is exhibited in pondering the various measures proposed, and in balancing their probable advantages, against the evils of which they may be productive. Much address and eloquence are employed by the leaders, who aspire at acquiring such confidence with their countrymen, as to have an ascendant in those assemblies.¹ But, among savage tribes, the field for displaying political talents cannot be extensive. Where the idea of private property is incomplete, and no criminal jurisdiction is established, there is hardly any function* of internal government to exercise. Where there is no commerce, and scarcely any intercourse among separate tribes; where enmity is implacable, and hostilities are carried on almost without intermission; there will be few points of public concern to adjust with their neighbours; and that department of their affairs which may be denominated foreign, cannot be so intricate as to require much refined policy in conducting it. Where individuals are so thoughtless and improvident as seldom to take effectual precautions for self-preservation, it is vain to expect that public measures and deliberations will be regulated by the contemplation of remote events. It is the genius of savages to act from the impulse of present passion. They have neither foresight nor temper to form complicated arrangements with respect to their future conduct. The consultations of the Americans, indeed, are so frequent, and their negotiations are so many,² and so long protracted, as to give their proceedings an extraordinary aspect of wisdom. But this is not owing so much to the depth of their schemes, as to the coldness and phlegm of their temper, which render them slow in determin-

¹ Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 269, &c.

² See Note XL.

ing.* If we except the celebrated league, that united the Five Nations in Canada into a federal republic, which shall be considered in its proper place, we can discern few such traces of political wisdom, among the rude American tribes, as discover any great degree of foresight or extent of intellectual abilities. Even among them, we shall find public measures more frequently directed by the impetuous ferocity of their youth, than regulated by the experience and wisdom of their old men.

Degree of affection. As the condition of man in the savage state is unfavourable to the progress of the understanding, it has a tendency likewise, in some respects, to check the exercise of affection, and to render the heart contracted. The strongest feeling in the mind of a savage is a sense of his own independence. He has sacrificed so small a portion of his natural liberty by becoming a member of society, that he remains, in a great degree, the sole master of his own actions.† He often takes his resolutions alone, without consulting, or feeling any connexion with the persons around him. In many of his operations, he stands as much detached from the rest of his species, as if he had formed no union with them. Conscious how little he depends upon other men, he is apt to view them with a careless indifference. Even the force of his mind contributes to increase this unconcern; and as he looks not beyond himself in deliberating with respect to the part which he should act, his solicitude about the consequences of it seldom extends farther. He pursues his own career, and indulges his own fancy, without inquiring or regarding whether what he does be agreeable or offensive to others, whether they may derive benefit or receive hurt from it. Hence the ungovernable caprice of

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 271.

† Fernandez Mission. de los Chequit. 33.

savages, their impatience under any species of restraint, their inability to suppress or moderate any inclination, the scorn or neglect with which they receive advice, their high estimation of themselves, and their contempt of other men. Among them, the pride of independence produces almost the same effects with interestedness in a more advanced state of society; it refers every thing to a man himself, it leads him to be indifferent about the manner in which his actions may affect other men, and renders the gratification of his own wishes the measure and end of conduct.

Hardness of heart. To the same cause may be imputed the hardness of heart, and insensibility, remarkable in all savage nations. Their minds, roused only by strong emotions, are little susceptible of gentle, delicate, or tender affections." Their union is so incomplete, that each individual acts as if he retained all his natural rights entire and undiminished. If a favour is conferred upon him, or any beneficial service is performed on his account, he receives it with much satisfaction, because it contributes to his enjoyment; but this sentiment extends not beyond himself, it excites no sense of obligation, he neither feels gratitude, nor thinks of making any return." Even among persons the most closely connected, the exchange of those good offices which strengthen attachment, mollify the heart, and sweeten the intercourse of life, is not frequent. The high ideas of independence among the Americans nourish a sullen reserve, which keeps them at a distance from each other. The nearest relations are mutually afraid to make any demand, or to solicit any service,* lest it should be considered by the other as imposing a burden, or laying a restraint upon his will.

Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 309. * Oviedo, Hist. lib. xvi. c. 2. See Note XLI.

* De la Potherie, iii. 28.

Indensi- I have already remarked the influence of
bility. this hard unfeeling temper upon domestic life, with respect to the connexion between husband and wife, as well as that between parents and children. Its effects are no less conspicuous, in the performance of those mutual offices of tenderness which the infirmities of our nature frequently exact. Among some tribes, when any of their number are seized with any violent disease, they are generally abandoned by all around them, who, careless of their recovery, fly in the utmost consternation from the supposed danger of infection.^a But even where they are not thus deserted, the cold indifference with which they are attended can afford them little consolation. No look of sympathy, no soothing expressions, no officious services, contribute to alleviate the distress of the sufferers, or to make them forget what they endure.^b Their nearest relations will often refuse to submit to the smallest inconveniency, or to part with the least trifle, however much it may tend to their accommodation or relief.^c So little is the breast of a savage susceptible of those sentiments which prompt men to that feeling attention which mitigates the calamities of human life, that, in some provinces of America, the Spaniards have found it necessary to enforce the common duties of humanity by positive laws, and to oblige husbands and wives, parents and children, under severe penalties, to take care of each other during their sickness.^d The same harshness of temper is still more conspicuous in their treatment of the animal creation. Prior to their intercourse with the people of Europe, the North Americans had some tame dogs, which accompanied them in their hunting

^a Lettre de P. Cataneo ap. Muratori Christian. i. 309. Tertre, ii. 410. Lozano, 100. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 2. Falkner's Descript. of Patagonia, 98.

^b Gumilla, i. 329. Lozano, 100.

^c Garcia Origen, &c. 90. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5.

^d Coguludo Hist. de Yacathan, p. 300.

excursions, and served them with all the ardour and fidelity peculiar to the species. But, instead of that fond attachment which the hunter naturally feels towards those useful companions of his toils, they requite their services with neglect, seldom feed, and never caress them.^c In other provinces the Americans have become acquainted with the domestic animals of Europe, and avail themselves of their service; but it is universally observed that they always treat them harshly,^d and never employ any method, either for breaking or managing them, but force and cruelty. In every part of the deportment of man in his savage state, whether towards his equals of the human species, or towards the animals below him, we recognise the same character, and trace the operations of a mind intent on its own gratifications, and regulated by its own caprice, with little attention or sensibility to the sentiments and feelings of the beings around him.

Taci-
turnity.

After explaining how unfavourable the savage state is to the cultivation of the understanding, and to the improvement of the heart, I should not have thought it necessary to mention what may be deemed its lesser defects, if the character of nations, as well as of individuals, were not often more distinctly marked by circumstances apparently trivial than by those of greater moment. A savage, frequently placed in situations of danger and distress, depending on himself alone, and wrapped up in his own thoughts and schemes, is a serious melancholy animal. His attention to others is small. The range of his own ideas is narrow. Hence that taciturnity which is so disgusting to men accustomed to the open intercourse of social conversation. When they are not engaged in action, the Americans often sit whole

^c Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 119. 337.

^d Ulloa Notic. American. 312.

days in one posture, without opening their lips. When they go forth to war, or to the chase, they usually march in a line at some distance from one another, and without exchanging a word. The same profound silence is observed when they row together in a canoe. It is only when they are animated by intoxicating liquors, or roused by the jollity of the festival and dance, that they become gay and conversible.

Cunning. To the same causes may be imputed the refined cunning with which they form and execute their schemes. Men who are not habituated to a liberal communication of their own sentiments and wishes, are apt to be so distrustful, as to place little confidence in others, and to have recourse to an insidious craft in accomplishing their own purposes. In civilized life, those persons, who, by their situations, have but a few objects of pursuit on which their minds incessantly dwell, are most remarkable for low artifice in carrying on their little projects. Among savages, whose views are equally confined, and their attention no less persevering, those circumstances must operate still more powerfully, and gradually accustom them to a disingenuous subtlety in all their transactions. The force of this is increased by habits which they acquire in carrying on the two most interesting operations wherein they are engaged. With them war is a system of craft, in which they trust for success to stratagem more than to open force, and have their invention continually on the stretch to circumvent and surprise their enemies. As hunters, it is their constant object to insnare, in order that they may destroy. Accordingly, art and cunning have been universally observed as distinguishing characteristics of all savages. The people of the rude tribes of America are remarkable for their artifice and du-

plicity. Impenetrably secret in forming their measures, they pursue them with a patient undeviating attention, and there is no refinement of dissimulation which they cannot employ, in order to ensure success. The natives of Peru were engaged above thirty years, in concerting the plan of that insurrection which took place under the viceroyalty of the marquis de Villa Garcia; and though it was communicated to a great number of persons, in all different ranks, no indication of it ever transpired during that long period; no man betrayed his trust, or by an unguarded look, or rash word, gave rise to any suspicion of what was intended.^a The dissimulation and craft of individuals is no less remarkable than that of nations. When set upon deceiving, they wrap themselves up so artificially, that it is impossible to penetrate into their intentions, or to detect their designs.^b

Virtues.

But if there be defects or vices peculiar to the savage state, there are likewise virtues which it inspires, and good qualities, to the exercise of which it is friendly. The bonds of society sit so loose upon the members of the more rude American tribes, that they hardly feel any restraint. Hence the spirit of independence, which is the pride of a savage, and which he considers as the unalienable prerogative of man. Incapable of control, and disdaining to acknowledge any superior, his mind, though limited in its powers, and erring in many of its pursuits, acquires such elevation by the consciousness of its own freedom, that he acts on some occasions with astonishing force, and perseverance, and dignity.

Independent spirit.

Fortitude. As independence nourishes this high spirit among savages, the perpetual wars in which they are engaged call it forth into action. Such long

^a Voyage de Ulton, ii. 309.

^b Gomilla, l. 162. Charlev.

intervals of tranquillity as are frequent in polished societies are unknown in the savage state. Their enmities, as I have observed, are implacable and immortal. The valour of the young men is never allowed to rust in inaction. The hatchet is always in their hand, either for attack or defence. Even in their hunting excursions, they must be on their guard against surprise from the hostile tribes by which they are surrounded. Accustomed to continual alarms, they grow familiar with danger; courage becomes an habitual virtue, resulting naturally from their situation, and strengthened by constant exertions. The mode of displaying fortitude may not be the same in small and rude communities, as in more powerful and civilized states. Their system of war, and standard of valour, may be formed upon different principles, but in no situation does the human mind rise more superior to the sense of danger, or the dread of death, than in its most simple and uncultivated state.

Attach-
ment to
their com-
munity.

Another virtue remarkable among savages, is attachment to the community of which they are members. From the nature of their political union, one might expect this tie to be extremely feeble. But there are circumstances which render the influence, even of their loose mode of association, very powerful. The American tribes are small; combined against their neighbours, in prosecution of ancient enmities, or in avenging recent injuries, their interests and operations are neither numerous nor complex. These are objects, which the uncultivated understanding of a savage can comprehend. His heart is capable of forming connexions, which are so little diffused. He assents with warmth to public measures, dictated by passions similar to those which direct his own conduct. Hence the ardour with which individuals undertake the most perilous service, when the community deems it necessary. Hence

their fierce and deep-rooted antipathy to the public enemies. Hence their zeal for the honour of their tribe, and that love of their country, which prompts them to brave danger that it may triumph, and to endure the most exquisite torments, without a groan, that it may not be disgraced.

Satisfaction with their own condition. Thus, in every situation where a human being can be placed, even in the most unfavourable, there are virtues which peculiarly belong to it; there are affections which it calls forth; there is a species of happiness which it yields. Nature, with most beneficent intention, conciliates and forms the mind to its condition; the ideas and wishes of man extend not beyond that state of society to which he is habituated. What it presents as objects of contemplation or enjoyment, fills and satisfies his mind, and he can hardly conceive any other mode of life to be pleasant, or even tolerable. The Tartar, accustomed to roam over extensive plains, and to subsist on the product of his herds, imprecates upon his enemy, as the greatest of all curses, that he may be condemned to reside in one place, and to be nourished with the top of a weed. The rude Americans, fond of their own pursuits, and satisfied with their own lot, are equally unable to comprehend the intention or utility of the various accommodations, which, in more polished society, are deemed essential to the comfort of life. Far from complaining of their own situation, or viewing that of men in a more improved state with admiration or envy, they regard themselves as the standard of excellence, as beings the best entitled, as well as the most perfectly qualified, to enjoy real happiness. Unaccustomed to any restraint upon their will or their actions, they behold with amazement the inequality of rank, and the subordination which takes place in civilized life, and consider the voluntary submission of one man to another,

as a renunciation, no less base than unaccountable, of the first distinction of humanity. Void of foresight, as well as free from care themselves, and delighted with that state of indolent security, they wonder at the anxious precautions, the unceasing industry, and complicated arrangements of Europeans, in guarding against distant evils, or providing for future wants; and they often exclaim against their preposterous folly, in thus multiplying the troubles, and increasing the labours of life.¹ This preference of their own manners is conspicuous on every occasion. Even the names, by which the various nations wish to be distinguished, are assumed from this idea of their own pre-eminence. The appellation which the Iroquois give to themselves is, *the chief of men*.² *Caraibe*, the original name of the fierce inhabitants of the Windward Islands, signifies, *the warlike people*.³ The Cherokees, from an idea of their own superiority, call the Europeans *Nothings*, or *the accursed race*, and assume to themselves the name of *the beloved people*.^m The same principle regulated the notions of the other Americans concerning the Europeans; for although, at first, they were filled with astonishment at their arts, and, with dread of their power, they soon came to abate their estimation of men, whose maxims of life were so different from their own. Hence they called them the froth of the sea, men without father or mother. They supposed, that either they had no country of their own, and therefore invaded that which belonged to others;ⁿ or that being destitute of the necessaries of life at home, they were obliged to roam over the ocean, in order to rob such as were more amply provided.

Men, thus satisfied with their condition, are far from any inclination to relinquish their own habits,

¹ Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 338. Lahontan, ii. 97.

² Coldan, i. 3.

³ Rochefort. Hist. des Antilles, 455.

^m Adair Hist. of Amer. Indians, p. 32.

ⁿ Benzon. Hist. Novi. Orbis, lib. iii. c. 21.

or to adopt those of civilized life. The transition is too violent to be suddenly made. Even where endeavours have been used to wean a savage from his own customs, and to render the accommodations of polished society familiar to him; even where he has been allowed to taste of those pleasures, and has been honoured with those distinctions, which are the chief objects of our desire, he droops and languishes under the restraint of laws and forms, he seizes the first opportunity of breaking loose from them, and returns with transport to the forest or the wild, where he can enjoy a careless and uncontrolled freedom.*

Thus I have finished a laborious delineation of the character and manners of the uncivilized tribes scattered over the vast continent of America. In this, I aspire not at rivalling the great masters who have painted and adorned savage life, either in boldness of design, or in the glow and beauty of their colouring. I am satisfied with the more humble merit of having persisted with patient industry, in viewing my subject in many various lights, and collecting from the most accurate observers such detached, and often minute features, as might enable me to exhibit a portrait that resembles the original.

General
caution
with re-
spect to
this in-
quiry.

Before I close this part of my work, one observation more is necessary, in order to justify the conclusions which I have formed, or to prevent the mistakes into which such as examine them may fall. In contemplating the inhabitants of a country so widely extended as America, great attention should be paid to the diversity of climates under which they are placed. The influence of this I have pointed out with respect to several important particulars, which have been the object of research; but, even where it has not been mentioned, it ought not to be overlooked. The provinces of

America are of such different temperament, that this alone is sufficient to constitute a distinction between their inhabitants. In every part of the earth where man exists, the power of climate operates, with decisive influence, upon his condition and character. In those countries which approach near to the extremes of heat or cold, this influence is so conspicuous as to strike every eye. Whether we consider man merely as an animal, or as being endowed with rational powers which fit him for activity and speculation, we shall find that he has uniformly attained the greatest perfection of which his nature is capable, in the temperate regions of the globe. There his constitution is most vigorous, his organs most acute, and his form most beautiful. There, too, he possesses a superior extent of capacity, greater fertility of imagination, more enterprising courage, and a sensibility of heart which gives birth to desires, not only ardent, but persevering. In this favourite situation he has displayed the utmost efforts of his genius, in literature, in policy, in commerce, in war, and in all the arts which improve or embellish life.^p

This powerful operation of climate is felt most sensibly by rude nations, and produces greater effects than in societies more improved. The talents of civilized men are continually exerted in rendering their own condition more comfortable; and by their ingenuity and inventions, they can, in a great measure, supply the defects, and guard against the inconveniences of any climate. But the improvident savage is affected by every circumstance peculiar to his situation. He takes no precaution either to mitigate or to improve it. Like a plant, or an animal, he is formed by the climate under which he is placed, and feels the full force of its influence.

In surveying the rude nations of America, this na-

^p Dr. Ferguson's Essay on the Hist. of Civil Society, part iii. c. 1.

tural distinction between the inhabitants of the temperate and torrid zones is very remarkable. They may, accordingly, be divided into two great classes. The one comprehends all the North Americans, from the river St. Laurence to the gulf of Mexico, together with the people of Chili, and a few small tribes towards the extremity of the southern continent. To the other belong all the inhabitants of the islands, and those settled in the various provinces which extend from the isthmus of Darien almost to the southern confines of Brazil, along the east side of the Andes. In the former, which comprehends all the regions of the temperate zone that in America are inhabited, the human species appears manifestly to be more perfect. The natives are more robust, more active, more intelligent, and more courageous. They possess, in the most eminent degree, that force of mind, and love of independence, which I have pointed out as the chief virtues of man in his savage state. They have defended their liberty with persevering fortitude against the Europeans, who subdued the other rude nations of America with the greatest ease. The natives of the temperate zone are the only people in the New World who are indebted for their freedom to their own valour. The North Americans, though long encompassed by three formidable European powers, still retain part of their original possessions, and continue to exist as independent nations. The people of Chili, though early invaded, still maintain a gallant contest with the Spaniards, and have set bounds to their encroachments; whereas, in the warmer regions, men are more feeble in their frame, less vigorous in the efforts of their minds, of a gentle but dastardly spirit, more enslaved by pleasure, and more sunk in indolence. Accordingly, it is in the torrid zone that the Europeans have most completely established their dominion over America; the most

fertile and desirable provinces in it are subjected to their yoke; and if several tribes there still enjoy independence, it is either because they have never been attacked by an enemy already satiated with conquest, and possessed of larger territories than he was able to occupy, or because they have been saved from oppression by their remote and inaccessible situation.

Conspicuous as this distinction may appear between the inhabitants of those different regions, it is not, however, universal. Moral and political causes, as I have formerly observed, affect the disposition and character of individuals, as well as nations, still more powerfully than the influence of climate. There are, accordingly, some tribes, in various parts of the torrid zone, possessed of courage, high spirit, and the love of independence, in a degree hardly inferior to the natives of more temperate climates. We are too little acquainted with the history of those people, to be able to trace the several circumstances in their progress and condition, to which they are indebted for this remarkable pre-eminence. The fact, nevertheless, is certain. As early as the first voyage of Columbus, he received information that several of the islands were inhabited by the *Caribbees*, a fierce race of men, nowise resembling their feeble and timid neighbours. In his second expedition to the New World, he found this information to be just, and was himself a witness of their intrepid valour.* The same character they have maintained invariably in all subsequent contests with the people of Europe;† and, even in our own times, we have seen them make a gallant stand in defence of the last territory which the rapacity of their invaders had left in their possession.‡ Some nations in Brazil were no less eminent for vigour of mind and bravery in war. The

* Life of Columbus, c. 47, 48. See Note XLII.

† Rochefort Hist. des Antilles, 531.

‡ See Note XLIII.

§ Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 207, &c.

people of the isthmus of Darien boldly met the Spaniards in the field, and frequently repelled those formidable invaders.* Other instances might be produced. It is not by attending to any single cause or principle, how powerful and extensive soever its influence may appear, that we can explain the actions, or account for the character of men. Even the law of climate, more universal, perhaps, in its operation than any that affects the human species, cannot be applied, in judging of their conduct, without many exceptions.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 15, &c. ; dec. 2. passim.

THE
HISTORY OF AMERICA.

BOOK V.

1518. **W**HEN Grijalva returned to Cuba, he found the armament destined to attempt the conquest of that rich country which he had discovered, almost complete. Not only ambition, but avarice, had urged Velasquez to hasten his preparations ; and having such a prospect of gratifying both, he had advanced considerable sums out of his private fortune towards defraying the expenses of the expedition. At the same time, he exerted his influence as governor, in engaging the most distinguished persons in the colony to undertake the service.* At a time when the spirit of the Spanish nation was adventurous to excess, a number of soldiers, eager to embark in any daring enterprise, soon appeared. But it was not so easy to find a person qualified to take the command in an expedition of so much importance ; and the character of Velasquez, who had the right of nomination, greatly increased the difficulty of the choice. Though of most aspiring ambition, and not destitute of talents for government, he possessed neither such courage nor such vigour and activity of mind, as to undertake in person the conduct of the armament which he was preparing. In this embarrassing situation, he formed the chimerical scheme, not only of achieving great ex-

Preparations of Velasquez for invading New Spain.

* See Note XLIV.

plots by a deputy, but of securing to himself the glory of conquests which were to be made by another. In the execution of this plan, he fondly aimed at reconciling contradictions. He was solicitous to choose a commander of intrepid resolution, and of superior abilities, because he knew these to be requisite in order to ensure success; but, at the same time, from the jealousy natural to little minds, he wished this person to be of a spirit so tame and obsequious, as to be entirely dependent on his will. But when he came to apply those ideas in forming an opinion concerning the several officers who occurred to his thoughts as worthy of being intrusted with the command, he soon perceived that it was impossible to find such incompatible qualities united in one character. Such as were distinguished for courage and talents were too high-spirited to be passive instruments in his hands. Those who appeared more gentle and tractable, were destitute of capacity, and unequal to the charge. This augmented his perplexity and his fears. He deliberated long, and with much solicitude, and was still wavering in his choice, when Amador de Lares, the royal treasurer in Cuba, and Andres Duero, his own secretary, the two persons in whom he chiefly confided, were encouraged by this irresolution to propose a new candidate, and they supported their recommendation with such assiduity and address, that, no less fatally for Velasquez than happily for their country, it proved successful.^b

He ap-
points
Cortes
command-
er.

The man whom they pointed out to him was Fernando Cortes. He was born at Medellin, a small town in Estremadura, in the year 1485, and descended from a family of noble blood, but of very moderate fortune. Being originally destined by his parents to the study of law, as the most likely method of bettering his condition,

^b B. Diaz. c. 19. Gomara Cron. c. 7. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 11.

he was sent early to the university of Salamanca, where he imbibed some tincture of learning. But he was soon disgusted with an academic life, which did not suit his ardent and restless genius, and retired to Medellin, where he gave himself up entirely to active sports and martial exercises. At this period of life, he was so impetuous, so overbearing, and so dissipated, that his father was glad to comply with his inclination, and sent him abroad as an adventurer in arms. There were in that age two conspicuous theatres, on which such of the Spanish youth as courted military glory might display their valour; one in Italy, under the command of the Great Captain; the other in the New World. Cortes preferred the former, but was prevented by indisposition from embarking with a reinforcement of troops sent to Naples. Upon this disappointment he turned his views towards America, whither he was allured by the prospect of the advantages which he might derive from the patronage of Ovando,^c the governor of Hispaniola, who was his kinsman. When he landed at St. Domingo, in 1504, his reception was such as equalled his most sanguine hopes, and he was employed by the governor in several honourable and lucrative stations. These, however, did not satisfy his ambition; and in the year 1511, he obtained permission to accompany Diego Velasquez in his expedition to Cuba. In this service he distinguished himself so much, that notwithstanding some violent contests with Velasquez, occasioned by trivial events, unworthy of remembrance, he was at length taken into favour, and received an ample concession of lands and of Indians, the recompense usually bestowed upon adventurers in the New World.^d

Though Cortes had not hitherto acted in high command, he had displayed such qualities in several

^c See Note XLV.

^d Gomara *Cron.* c. 1—S.

scenes of difficulty and danger, as raised universal expectation, and turned the eyes of his countrymen towards him, as one capable of performing great things. The turbulence of youth, as soon as he found objects and occupations suited to the ardour of his mind, gradually subsided, and settled into a habit of regular indefatigable activity. The impetuosity of his temper, when he came to act with his equals, insensibly abated, by being kept under restraint, and mellowed into a cordial soldierly frankness. These qualities were accompanied with calm prudence in concerting his schemes, with persevering vigour in executing them, and with what is peculiar to superior genius, the art of gaining the confidence and governing the minds of men. To all which were added the inferior accomplishments that strike the vulgar, and command their respect; a graceful person, a winning aspect, extraordinary address in martial exercises, and a constitution of such vigour as to be capable of enduring any fatigue.

As soon as Cortes was mentioned to Velasquez by his two confidants, he flattered himself that he had at length found what he had hitherto sought in vain, a man with talents for command, but not an object for jealousy. Neither the rank nor the fortune of Cortes, as he imagined, were such that he could aspire at independence. He had reason to believe that by his own readiness to bury ancient animosities in oblivion, as well as his liberality in conferring several recent favours, he had already gained the good-will of Cortes, and hoped, by this new and unexpected mark of confidence, that he might attach him for ever to his interest.

Cortes, receiving his commission with the warmest expressions of respect and gratitude to the governor, immediately erected his standard before his own house, appeared in a military dress, and assumed all the ensigns of

Soon be-
comes jea-
lous of
him.
Oct. 23.

his new dignity. His utmost influence and activity were exerted in persuading many of his friends to engage in the service, and in urging forward the preparations for the voyage. All his own funds, together with what money he could raise by mortgaging his lands and Indians, were expended in purchasing military stores and provisions, or in supplying the wants of such of his officers as were unable to equip themselves in a manner suited to their rank.^e Inoffensive, and even laudable as this conduct was, his disappointed competitors were malicious enough to give it a turn to his disadvantage. They represented him as aiming already, with little disguise, at establishing an independent authority over his troops, and endeavouring to secure their respect or love by his ostentatious and interested liberality. They reminded Velasquez of his former dissensions with the man whom he now reposed so much confidence, and foretold that Cortes would be more apt to avail himself of the power, which the governor was inconsiderately putting in his hands to avenge past injuries, than to requite recent obligations. These insinuations made such impression upon the suspicious mind of Velasquez, that Cortes soon observed some symptoms of a growing alienation and distrust in his behaviour, and was advised by Lares and Duero, to hasten his departure, before these should become so confirmed, as to break out with open violence. Fully sensible of this danger, he urged forward his preparations with such rapidity, that he set sail from St. Jago de Cuba on the 18th of November, Velasquez accompanying him to the shore, and taking leave of him with an appearance of perfect friendship and confidence, though he had secretly given it in charge to some of Cortes's officers, to keep a watchful eye upon every part of their commander's conduct.^f

^e See Note XVI.^f Gomara Chron. c. 7. B. Diaz. c. 20.

Endea-
vours to
deprive
him of his
commis-
sion.

Cortes proceeded to Trinidad, a small settlement on the same side of the island, where he was joined by several adventurers, and received a supply of provisions and military stores, of which his stock was still very incomplete. He had hardly left St. Jago, when the jealousy which had been working in the breast of Velasquez, grew so violent, that it was impossible to suppress it. The armament was no longer under his own eye and direction; and he felt, that as his power over it ceased, that of Cortes would become more absolute. Imagination now aggravated every circumstance, which had formerly excited suspicion: the rivals of Cortes industriously threw in reflections which increased his fears; and with no less art than malice they called superstition to their aid, employing the predictions of an astrologer in order to complete the alarm. All these, by their united operation, produced the desired effect. Velasquez repented bitterly of his own imprudence, in having committed a trust of so much importance to a person whose fidelity appeared so doubtful, and hastily dispatched instructions to Trinidad, empowering Verdugo, the chief magistrate there, to deprive Cortes of his commission. But Cortes had already made such progress in gaining the esteem and confidence of his troops, that, finding officers as well as soldiers equally zealous to support his authority, he soothed or intimidated Verdugo, and was permitted to depart from Trinidad without molestation.

And to lay
him under
arrest.

From Trinidad Cortes sailed for the Havana, in order to raise more soldiers, and to complete the victualling of his fleet. There several persons of distinction entered into the service, and engaged to supply what provisions were still wanting; but as it was necessary to allow them some time for performing what they had promised, Velas-

quez, sensible that he ought no longer to rely on a man of whom he had so openly discovered his distrust, availed himself of the interval which this unavoidable delay afforded, in order to make one attempt more to wrest the command out of the hands of Cortes. He loudly complained of Verdugo's conduct, accusing him either of childish facility, or of manifest treachery, in suffering Cortes to escape from Trinidad. Anxious to guard against a second disappointment, he sent a person of confidence to the Havana, with peremptory injunctions to Pedro Barba, his lieutenant-governor in that colony, instantly to arrest Cortes, to send him prisoner to St. Jago under a strong guard, and to countermand the sailing of the armament until he should receive farther orders. He wrote likewise to the principal officers, requiring them to assist Barba in executing what he had given him in charge. But before the arrival of this messenger, a Franciscan friar of St. Jago had secretly conveyed an account of this interesting transaction to Bartholomew de Olmedo, a monk of the same order, who acted as chaplain to the expedition.

Cortes defeated his schemes, and continues his preparations.

Cortes, forewarned of the danger, had time to take precautions for his own safety. His first step was to find some pretext for removing from the Havana Diego de Ordaz, an officer of great merit, but in whom, on account of his known attachment to Velasquez, he could not confide in this trying and delicate juncture. He gave him the command of a vessel, destined to take on board some provisions in a small harbour beyond Cape Antonio, and thus made sure of his absence, without seeming to suspect his fidelity. When he was gone, Cortes no longer concealed the intentions of Velasquez from his troops; and as officers and soldiers were equally impatient to set out on an expedition, in preparing for which most of them had ex-

pended all their fortunes, they expressed their astonishment and indignation at that illiberal jealousy, to which the governor was about to sacrifice, not only the honour of their general, but all their sanguine hopes of glory and wealth. With one voice they entreated that he would not abandon the important station to which he had such a good title. They conjured him not to deprive them of a leader whom they followed with such well-founded confidence, and offered to shed the last drop of their blood in maintaining his authority. Cortes was easily induced to comply with what he himself so ardently desired. He swore that he would never desert soldiers who had given him such a signal proof of their attachment, and promised instantly to conduct them to that rich country, which had been so long the object of their thoughts and wishes. This declaration was received with transports of military applause, accompanied with threats and imprecations against all who should presume to call in question the jurisdiction of their general, or to obstruct the execution of his designs.

The amount of his forces Every thing was now ready for their departure, but though this expedition was fitted out by the united effort of the Spanish power in Cuba; though every settlement had contributed its quota of men and provisions; though the governor had laid out considerable sums and each adventurer had exhausted his stock, or strained his credit, the poverty of the preparations was such as must astonish the present age, and bore, indeed, no resemblance to an armament destined for the conquest of a great empire. The fleet consisted of eleven vessels; the largest of a hundred tons, which was dignified by the name of Admiral; three of seventy or eighty tons, and the rest small open barks. On board of these were six hundred and seventeen men; of

which five hundred and eight belonged to the land service, and a hundred and nine were seamen or artificers. The soldiers were divided into eleven companies, according to the number of the ships; to each of which Cortes appointed a captain, and committed to him the command of the vessel while at sea, and of the men when on shore.^g As the use of fire-arms among the nations of Europe was hitherto confined to a few battalions of regularly disciplined infantry, only thirteen soldiers were armed with muskets, thirty-two were cross-bowmen, and the rest had swords and spears. Instead of the usual defensive armour, which must have been cumbersome in a hot climate, the soldiers wore jackets quilted with cotton, which experience had taught the Spaniards to be a sufficient protection against the weapons of the Americans. They had only sixteen horses, ten small field-pieces, and four falconets.^h

Feb. 10.

1519.

His departure from Cuba.

With this slender and ill-provided train did Cortes set sail, to make war upon a monarch whose dominions were more extensive than all the kingdoms subject to the Spanish crown. As religious enthusiasm always mingled with the spirit of adventure in the New World, and, by a combination still more strange, united with avarice, in prompting the Spaniards to all their enterprises, a large cross was displayed in their standards, with this inscription, *Let us follow the cross, for under this sign we shall conquer.*

So powerfully were Cortes and his followers animated with both these passions, that no less eager to plunder the opulent country whither they were bound, than zealous to propagate the Christian faith among its inhabitants, they set out, not with the solicitude natural to men going upon dangerous services, but with that confidence which arises

^g See Note XLVII.

^h B. Diaz. c. 10.

from security of success, and certainty of the divine protection.

Foot. 1. 5. at Cozumel. As Cortes had determined to touch at every place which Grijalva had visited, he steered directly towards the island of Cozumel; there he had the good fortune to redeem Jerome de Aguilar, a Spaniard, who had been eight years a prisoner among the Indians. This man was perfectly acquainted with a dialect of their language, understood through a large extent of country, and, possessing besides a considerable share of prudence and sagacity, proved

Foot. 1. 5. at Cozumel. extremely useful as an interpreter. From Cozumel, Cortes proceeded to the river of

Foot. 1. 5. at Cozumel. Tabasco, in hopes of a reception as friendly as Grijalva had met with there, and of finding gold in the same abundance; but the disposition of the natives, from some unknown cause, was totally changed. After repeated endeavours to conciliate their good-will, he was constrained to have recourse to violence. Though the forces of the enemy were numerous, and advanced with extraordinary courage, they were routed with great slaughter, in several successive actions. The loss which they sustained, and still more the astonishment and terror excited by the destructive effect of the fire-arms, and the dreadful appearance of the horses, humbled their fierce spirits, and induced them to sue for peace. They acknowledged the king of Castile as their sovereign, and granted Cortes a supply of provisions, with a present of cotton garments, some gold, and twenty female slaves.*

Arrives at St. Juan de Ulua. Cortes continued his course to the westward, keeping as near the shore as possible, in order to observe the country; but could discover no proper place for landing, until he arrived

April 2. at St. Juan de Ulua.^k As he entered this harbour, a large canoe full of people, among whom were two who seemed to be persons of distinction, approached his ship with signs of peace and amity. They came on board without fear or distrust, and addressed him in a most respectful manner, but in a language altogether unknown to Aguilar. Cortes was in the utmost perplexity and distress, at an event of which he instantly foresaw all the consequences, and already felt the hesitation and uncertainty with which he should carry on the great schemes which he meditated, if, in his transactions with the natives, he must depend entirely upon such an imperfect, ambiguous, and conjectural mode of communication, as the use of signs. But he did not remain long in his embarrassing situation; a fortunate accident extricated him, when his own sagacity could have contributed little towards his relief. One of the female slaves, whom he had received from the cazique of Tabasco, happened to be present at the first interview between Cortes and his new guests. She perceived his distress, as well as the confusion of Aguilar; and as she perfectly understood the Mexican language, she explained what they had said in the Yucatan tongue, with which Aguilar was acquainted. This woman, known afterward by the name of Donna Marina, and who makes a conspicuous figure in the history of the New World, where great revolutions were brought about by small causes and inconsiderable instruments, was born in one of the provinces of the Mexican empire. Having been sold as a slave in the early part of her life, after a variety of adventures she fell into the hands of the Tabascans, and had resided long enough among them to acquire their language, without losing the use of her own. Though it was both tedious and troublesome to converse by the intervention of two

^k B. Diaz. c. 31—36. Gomara Cron. c. 18—23. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 11, &c.

different interpreters, Cortes was so highly pleased with having discovered this method of carrying on some intercourse with the people of a country into which he was determined to penetrate, that in the transports of his joy he considered it as a visible interposition of Providence in his favour¹

Lands his troops. He now learned, that the two persons whom he had received on board of his ship were deputies from Teutile and Pilpatoe, two officers intrusted with the government of that province, by a great monarch, whom they called Montezuma; and that they were sent to inquire what his intentions were in visiting their coast, and to offer him what assistance he might need, in order to continue his voyage. Cortes, struck with the appearance of those people, as well as the tenor of the message, assured them, in respectful terms, that he approached their country with most friendly sentiments, and came to propose matters of great importance to the welfare of their prince and his kingdom, which he would unfold more fully, in person, to the governor and the general. Next morning, without waiting for any answer, he landed his troops, his horses, and artillery: and having chosen proper ground, began to erect huts for his men, and to fortify his camp. The natives, instead of opposing the entrance of those fatal guests into their country, assisted them in all their operations, with an alacrity of which they had ere long good reason to repent.

His first interview with the Mexicans Next day Teutile and Pilpatoe entered the Spanish camp with a numerous retinue, and Cortes considering them as the ministers of a great monarch, entitled to a degree of attention very different from that which the Spaniards were accustomed to pay the petty caziques, with whom they had intercourse in the isles, received them with much

¹ B. Diaz. c. 37—39. Gomara Cron. c. 25, 26. Herrera, dec. 2 lib. v. c. 4.

formal ceremony. He informed them, that he came as ambassador from Don Carlos of Austria, king of Castile, the greatest monarch of the East, and was intrusted with propositions of such moment, that he could impart them to none but the emperor Montezuma himself, and therefore required them to conduct him, without loss of time, into the presence of their master. The Mexican officers could not conceal their uneasiness at a request, which they knew would be disagreeable, and which they foresaw might prove extremely embarrassing to their sovereign, whose mind had been filled with many disquieting apprehensions, ever since the former appearance of the Spaniards on his coasts. But before they attempted to dissuade Cortes from insisting on his demand, they endeavoured to conciliate his good-will by entreating him to accept of certain presents, which, as humble slaves of Montezuma, they laid at his feet. These were introduced with great parade, and consisted of fine cotton cloth, of plumes of various colours, and of ornaments of gold and silver to a considerable value; the workmanship of which appeared to be as curious as the materials were rich. The display of these produced an effect very different from what the Mexicans intended. Instead of satisfying, it increased the avidity of the Spaniards, and rendered them so eager and impatient to become masters of a country which abounded with such precious productions, that Cortes could hardly listen with patience to the arguments which Pilpatoe and Teutile employed to dissuade him from visiting the capital, and in a haughty determined tone he insisted on his demand, of being admitted to a personal audience of their sovereign. During this interview, some painters, in the train of the Mexican chiefs, had been diligently employed in delineating, upon white cotton cloths, figures of the ships, the horses, the artillery,

the soldiers, and whatever else attracted their eyes, as singular. When Cortes observed this, and was informed that these pictures were to be sent to Montezuma, in order to convey to him a more lively idea of the strange and wonderful objects now presented to their view, than any words could communicate, he resolved to render the representation still more animating and interesting, by exhibiting such a spectacle as might give both them and their monarch an awful impression of the extraordinary prowess of his followers, and the irresistible force of their arms. The trumpets, by his order, sounded an alarm; the troops, in a moment, formed in order of battle, the infantry performed such martial exercises as were best suited to display the effect of their different weapons; the horse, in various evolutions, gave a specimen of their agility and strength; the artillery pointed towards the thick woods which surrounded the camp, were fired, and made dreadful havoc among the trees. The Mexicans looked on with that silent amazement which is natural when the mind is struck with objects, which are both awful and above its comprehension. But, at the explosion of the cannon, many of them fled, some fell to the ground, and all were so much confounded at the sight of men whose power so nearly resembled that of the gods, that Cortes found it difficult to compose and reassure them. The painters had now many new objects on which to exercise their art, and they put their fancy on the stretch in order to invent figures and symbols to represent the extraordinary things which they had seen.

Negotiations with Montezuma.

Messengers were immediately dispatched to Montezuma with those pictures, and a full account of every thing that had passed since the arrival of the Spaniards, and by them Cortes sent a present of some European curiosities to Monte-

zuma, which, though of no great value, he believed would be acceptable on account of their novelty. The Mexican monarchs, in order to obtain early information of every occurrence in all the corners of their extensive empire, had introduced a refinement in police, unknown, at that time, in Europe. They had couriers posted at proper stations along the principal roads ; and as these were trained to agility by a regular education, and relieved one another at moderate distances, they conveyed intelligence with surprising rapidity. Though the capital in which Montezuma resided was above a hundred and eighty miles from St. Juan de Ulua, Cortes's presents were carried thither, and an answer to his demands was received in a few days. The same officers who had hitherto treated with the Spaniards, were employed to deliver this answer ; but as they knew how repugnant the determination of their master was to all the schemes and wishes of the Spanish commander, they would not venture to make it known until they had previously endeavoured to soothe and mollify him. For this purpose they renewed their negotiations, by introducing a train of a hundred Indians, loaded with presents sent to him by Montezuma. The magnificence of these was such as became a great monarch, and far exceeded any idea which the Spaniards had hitherto formed of his wealth. They were placed on mats spread on the ground, in such order as shewed them to the greatest advantage. Cortes and his officers viewed, with admiration, the various manufactures of the country, cotton stuffs so fine, and of such delicate texture, as to resemble silk ; pictures of animals, trees, and other natural objects, formed with feathers of different colours, disposed and mingled with such skill and elegance, as to rival the works of the pencil in truth and beauty of imitation. But what chiefly attracted

His presents.

their eyes, were two large plates of a circular form, one of massive gold representing the sun, the other of silver, an emblem of the moon.* These were accompanied with bracelets, collars, rings, and other trinkets of gold; and that nothing might be wanting which could give the Spaniards a complete idea of what the country afforded, with some boxes filled with pearls, precious stones, and grains of gold unwrought, as they had been found in the mines or rivers. Cortes received all these with an appearance of profound veneration for the monarch by whom

Forbids
Cortes to
approach
his capital. they were bestowed. But when the Mexicans, presuming upon this, informed him, that their master, though he desired him to accept of what he had sent as a token of regard for that monarch whom Cortes represented, would not give his consent that foreign troops should approach nearer to his capital, or even allow them to continue longer in his dominions, the Spanish general declared, in a manner more resolute and peremptory than formerly, that he must insist on his first demand, as he could not, without dishonour, return to his own country, until he was admitted into the presence of the prince whom he was appointed to visit in the name of his sovereign. The Mexicans, astonished at seeing any man dare to oppose that will, which they were accustomed to consider as supreme and irresistible, yet afraid of precipitating their country into an open rupture with such formidable enemies, prevailed with Cortes to promise, that he would not move from his present camp, until the return of a messenger, whom they sent to Montezuma for farther instructions.¹

State of
the Mexi-
can empire
at that pe-
riod.

The firmness with which Cortes adhered to his original proposal, should naturally have brought the negotiation between him and Montezuma to a speedy issue, as it seemed

* See Note XLIX

¹ B. Diaz, c. 39. Gomara Cron. c. 27. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 5, 6

to leave the Mexican monarch no choice, but either to receive him with confidence as a friend, or to oppose him openly as an enemy. The latter was what might have been expected from a haughty prince in possession of extensive power. The Mexican empire, at this period, was at a pitch of grandeur to which no society ever attained in so short a period. Though it had subsisted, according to their own traditions, only a hundred and thirty years, its dominion extended from the North to the South sea, over territories stretching, with some small interruption, above five hundred leagues from east to west, and more than two hundred from north to south, comprehending provinces not inferior in fertility, population, and opulence, to any in the torrid zone. The people were warlike and enterprising; the authority of the monarch unbounded, and his revenues considerable. If, with the forces which might have been suddenly assembled in such an empire, Montezuma had fallen upon the Spaniards while encamped on a barren unhealthy coast, unsupported by any ally, without a place of retreat, and destitute of provisions, it seems to be impossible, even with all the advantages of their superior discipline and arms, that they could have stood the shock, and they must either have perished in such an unequal contest, or have abandoned the enterprise.

Character
of the monarch.

As the power of Montezuma enabled him to take this spirited part, his own dispositions were such as seemed naturally to prompt him to it. Of all the princes who had swayed the Mexican sceptre, he was the most haughty, the most violent, and the most impatient of control. His subjects looked up to him with awe, and his enemies with terror. The former he governed with unexampled rigour; but they were impressed with such an opinion of his capacity, as commanded their re-

spect ; and, by many victories over the latter, he had spread far the dread of his arms, and had added several considerable provinces to his dominions. But though his talents might be suited to the transactions of a state so imperfectly polished as the Mexican empire, and sufficient to conduct them while in their accustomed course, they were altogether inadequate to a conjuncture so extraordinary, and did not qualify him either to judge with the discernment, or to act with the decision requisite in such a trying emergence.

His perplexity and terror upon the arrival of the Spaniards.

From the moment that the Spaniards appeared on his coast, he discovered symptoms of timidity and embarrassment. Instead of taking such resolutions as the consciousness of his own power, or the memory of his former exploits, might have inspired, he deliberated with an anxiety and hesitation which did not escape the notice of his meanest courtiers. The perplexity and discomposure of Montezuma's mind upon this occasion, as well as the general dismay of his subjects, were not owing wholly to the impression which the Spaniards had made by the novelty of their appearance and the terror of their arms. Its origin may be traced up to a more remote source. There was an opinion, if we may believe the earliest and most authentic Spanish historians, almost universal amongst the Americans, that some dreadful calamity was impending over their heads, from a race of formidable invaders, who should come from regions towards the rising sun, to overrun and desolate their country. Whether this disquieting apprehension flowed from the memory of some natural calamity which had afflicted that part of the globe, and impressed the minds of the inhabitants with superstitious fears and forebodings, or whether it was an imagination accidentally suggested by the astonishment which the first

sight of a new race of men occasioned, it is impossible to determine. But as the Mexicans were more prone to superstition than any people in the New World, they were more deeply affected by the appearance of the Spaniards, whom their credulity instantly represented as the instrument destined to bring about this fatal revolution which they dreaded. Under those circumstances, it ceases to be incredible that a handful of adventurers should alarm the monarch of a great empire, and all his subjects."

*Continues
to negoti-
ate*

Notwithstanding the influence of this impression, when the messenger arrived from the Spanish camp with an account that the

leader of the strangers, adhering to his original demand, refused to obey the order enjoining him to leave the country, Montezuma assumed some degree of resolution, and, in a transport of rage natural to a fierce prince unaccustomed to meet with any opposition to his will, he threatened to sacrifice those presumptuous men to his gods. But his doubts and fears quickly returned, and instead of issuing orders to carry his threats into execution, he again called his ministers to confer and offer their advice. Feeble and temporising measures will always be the result when men assemble to deliberate in a situation where they ought to act. The Mexican counsellors took no effectual measure for expelling such troublesome intruders, and were satisfied with issuing a more positive injunction, requiring them to leave the country; but this they preposterously accompanied with a present of such value, as proved fresh inducement to remain there.

*Anxiety
and apprehensions
of the
Spaniards.*

Meanwhile the Spaniards were not without solicitude or a variety of sentiments, in deliberating concerning their own future conduct.

From what they had already seen, many of

° Cortes Relatione Seconda, ap. Ramus, iii. 231, 235. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 1. lib. v. c. 11. lib. vii. c. 6. Gomara Chron. c. 60. 92. 144.

them formed such extravagant ideas concerning the opulence of the country, that, despising danger or hardships, when **they** had in view treasures which appeared to be inexhaustible, they were eager to attempt the conquest. Others, estimating the **power** of the Mexican empire by its wealth, and enumerating the various proofs which had occurred of its being under a well regulated administration, contended, that it would be an act of the wildest frenzy to attack such a state with a small body of men, in want of provisions, unconnected with any ally, and already enfeebled by the diseases peculiar to the climate, and the loss of several of their number.^p Cortes secretly applauded the advocates for bold measures, and cherished their romantic hopes, as such ideas corresponded with his own, and favoured the execution of the schemes which he had formed. From the time that the suspicions of Velasquez broke out with open violence in the attempts to deprive him of the

Schemes of Cortes. command, Cortes saw the necessity of dissolving a connexion which would obstruct and embarrass all his operations, and watched for a proper opportunity of coming to a final rupture with him. Having this in view, he had laboured by every art to secure the esteem and affection of his soldiers. With his abilities for command, it was easy to gain their esteem; and his followers were quickly satisfied that they might rely, with perfect confidence, on the conduct and courage of their leader. Nor was it more difficult to acquire their affection. Among adventurers, nearly of the same rank, and serving at their own expense, the dignity of command did not elevate a general above mingling with those who acted under him. Cortes availed himself of this freedom of intercourse, to insinuate himself into their favour, and by his affable manners, by well-timed

acts of liberality to some, by inspiring all with vast hopes, and by allowing them to trade privately with the natives,^a he attached the greater part of his soldiers so firmly to himself, that they almost forgot that the armament had been fitted out by the authority, and at the expense of another.

His address in carrying them on.

During those intrigues, Teutile arrived with the present from Montezuma, and, together with it, delivered the ultimate order of that monarch to depart instantly out of his dominions; and when Cortes, instead of complying, renewed his request of an audience, the Mexican turned from him abruptly, and quitted the camp with looks and gestures which strongly expressed his surprise and resentment. Next morning, none of the natives, who used to frequent the camp in great numbers, in order to barter with the soldiers, and to bring in provisions, appeared. All friendly correspondence seemed now to be at an end, and it was expected every moment that hostilities would commence. This, though an event that might have been foreseen, occasioned a sudden consternation among the Spaniards, which imboldened the adherents of Velasquez not only to murmur and cabal against their general, but to appoint one of their number to remonstrate openly against his imprudence in attempting the conquest of a mighty empire with such inadequate force, and to urge the necessity of returning to Cuba, in order to refit the fleet and augment the army. Diego de Ordez, one of his principal officers, whom the malecontents charged with this commission, delivered it with a soldierly freedom and bluntness, assuring Cortes that he spoke the sentiments of the whole army. He listened to this remonstrance without any appearance of emotion, and as he well knew the temper and wishes of his soldiers, and foresaw how they

^a See Note I.

would receive a proposition fatal at once to all the splendid hopes and schemes which they had been forming with such complacency, he carried his dissimulation so far as to seem to relinquish his own measures in compliance with the request of Ordaz, and issued orders that the army should be in readiness next day to re-embark for Cuba. As soon as this was known, the disappointed adventurers exclaimed and threatened; the emissaries of Cortes, mingling with them, inflamed their rage; the ferment became general; the whole camp was almost in open mutiny; all demanding with eagerness to see their commander. Cortes was not slow in appearing; when, with one voice, officers and soldiers expressed their astonishment and indignation at the orders which they had received. It was unworthy, they cried, of the Castilian courage, to be daunted at the first aspect of danger, and infamous to fly before any enemy appeared. For their parts, they were determined not to relinquish an enterprise, that had hitherto been successful, and which tended so visibly to spread the knowledge of true religion, and to advance the glory and interest of their country. Happy under his command, they would follow him with alacrity through every danger, in quest of those settlements and treasures which he had so long held out to their view; but if he chose rather to return to Cuba, and tamely give up all his hopes of distinction and opulence to an envious rival, they would instantly choose another general to conduct them in that path of glory, which he had not spirit to enter.

Cortes, delighted with their ardour, took no offence at the boldness with which it was uttered. The sentiments were what he himself had inspired, and the warmth of expression satisfied him that his followers had imbibed them thoroughly. He affected, however, to be surprised at what he heard, declaring that his

orders to prepare for embarking were issued from a persuasion that this was agreeable to his troops; that, from deference to what he had been informed was their inclination, he had sacrificed his own private opinion, which was firmly bent on establishing immediately a settlement on the sea-coast, and then on endeavouring to penetrate into the interior part of the country; that now he was convinced of his error; and as he perceived that they were animated with the generous spirit which breathed in every true Spaniard, he would resume, with fresh ardour, his original plan of operation, and doubted not to conduct them, in the career of victory, to such independent fortunes as their valour merited. Upon this declaration, shouts of applause testified the excess of their joy. The measure seemed to be taken with unanimous consent; such as secretly condemned it being obliged to join in the acclamations, partly to conceal their disaffection from their general, and partly to avoid the imputation of cowardice from their fellow-soldiers.'

Without allowing his men time to cool or to reflect, Cortes set about carrying his design into execution. In order to give a beginning to a colony, he assembled the principal persons in his army, and by their suffrage elected a council and magistrates in whom the government was to be vested. As men naturally transplant the institutions and forms of the mother-country into their new settlements, this was framed upon the model of a Spanish corporation. The magistrates were distinguished by the same names and ensigns of office, and were to exercise a similar jurisdiction. All the persons chosen were most firmly devoted to Cortes, and the instrument of their election was framed in the king's name, without any mention of their depend-

Estab-
lishes a
form of
civil go-
vernment.

ence on Velasquez. The two principles of avarice and enthusiasm, which prompted the Spaniards to all their enterprises in the New World, seem to have concurred in suggesting the name which Cortes bestowed on his infant settlement. He called it, *The rich town of the true Cross.*

Resigns his
commis-
sion,

The first meeting of the new council was distinguished by a transaction of great moment. As soon as it assembled, Cortes applied for leave to enter; and approaching with many marks of profound respect, which added dignity to the tribunal, and set an example of reverence for its authority, he began a long harangue, in which, with much art, and in terms extremely flattering to persons just entering upon their new function, he observed, that as the supreme jurisdiction over the colony which they had planted was now vested in this court, he considered them as clothed with the authority, and representing the person of their sovereign; that accordingly he would communicate to them what he deemed essential to the public safety, with the same dutiful fidelity as if he were addressing his royal master; that the security of a colony settled in a great empire, whose sovereign had already discovered his hostile intentions, depended upon arms, and the efficacy of these upon the subordination and discipline preserved among the troops; that his right to command was derived from a commission granted by the governor of Cuba, and as that had been long since revoked, the lawfulness of his jurisdiction might well be questioned; that he might be thought to act upon a defective, or even a dubious title: nor could they trust an army which might dispute the powers of its general, at a juncture when it ought implicitly to obey his orders; that, moved by these considerations, he now resigned all his

authority to them, that they, having both right to choose, and power to confer full jurisdiction, might appoint one in the king's name, to command the army in its future operations ; and as for his own part, such was his zeal for the service in which they were engaged, that he would most cheerfully take up a pike with the same hand that laid down the general's truncheon, and convince his fellow-soldiers, that though accustomed to command, he had not forgotten how to obey. Having finished his discourse, he laid the commission from Velasquez upon the table, and after kissing his truncheon, delivered it to the chief magistrate, and withdrew.

And is
chosen
chief-justice
and
captain-general.

The deliberations of the council were not long, as Cortes had concerted this important measure with his confidants, and had prepared the other members with great address, for the part which he wished them to take. His resignation was accepted ; and as the uninterrupted tenor of their prosperity under his conduct afforded the most satisfying evidence of his abilities for command, they, by their unanimous suffrage, elected him chief-justice of the colony, and captain-general of its army, and appointed his commission to be made out in the king's name, with most ample powers, which were to continue in force until the royal pleasure should be farther known. That this deed might not be deemed the machination of a junto, the council called together the troops, and acquainted them with what had been resolved. The soldiers, with eager applause, ratified the choice which the council had made ; the air resounded with the name of Cortes, and all vowed to shed their blood in support of his authority.

Asserts his
authority
with vigour

Cortes having now brought his intrigues to the desired issue, and shaken off his mortifying dependence on the governor of Cuba, accepted of the commission, which vested in him su-

preme jurisdiction, civil as well as military, over the colony, with many professions of respect to the council, and gratitude to the army. Together with this new command, he assumed greater dignity, and began to exercise more extensive powers. Formerly he had felt himself to be only the deputy of a subject; now he acted as the representative of his sovereign. The adherents of Velasquez, fully aware of what would be the effect of this change in the situation of Cortes, could no longer continue silent and passive spectators of his actions. They exclaimed openly against the proceedings of the council as illegal, and against those of the army as mutinous. Cortes, instantly perceiving the necessity of giving a timely check to such seditious discourse by some vigorous measure, arrested Ordaz, Escudero, and Valasquez de Leon, the ringleaders of this faction, and sent them prisoners aboard the fleet, loaded with chains. Their dependants, astonished and over-awed, remained quiet; and Cortes, more desirous to reclaim than to punish his prisoners, who were officers of great merit, courted their friendship with such assiduity and address, that the reconciliation was perfectly cordial; and on the most trying occasions, neither their connexion with the governor of Cuba, nor the memory of the indignity with which they had been treated, tempted them to swerve from an inviolable attachment to his interest.^a In this, as well as his other negotiations at this critical conjuncture, which decided with respect to his future fame and fortune, Cortes owed much of his success to the Mexican gold, which he distributed with a liberal hand both among his friends and his opponents.^b

His friend-
ship court-

Cortes, having thus rendered the union between himself and his army indissoluble, by

^a B. Diaz, c. 12-13. *Cronica Cronica*, p. 11. Herrera, dec. 2 lib. v. c. 7.

^b B. Diaz, c. 14.

ed by the Zempoallans. engaging it to join him in disclaiming any dependence on the governor of Cuba, and in repeated acts of disobedience to his authority, thought he might now venture to quit the camp in which he had hitherto remained, and advance into the country. To this he was encouraged by an event no less fortunate than seasonable. Some Indians having approached his camp in a mysterious manner, were introduced into his presence. He found that they were sent with a proffer of friendship from the cazique of Zempoalla, a considerable town at no great distance; and from their answers to a variety of questions which he put to them, according to his usual practice in every interview with the people of the country, he gathered, that their master, though subject to the Mexican empire, was impatient of the yoke, and filled with such dread and hatred of Montezuma, that nothing could be more acceptable to him than any prospect of deliverance from the oppression under which he groaned. On hearing this, a ray of light and hope broke in upon the mind of Cortes. He saw that the great empire which he intended to attack was neither perfectly united, nor its sovereign universally beloved. He concluded, that the causes of disaffection could not be confined to one province, but that in other corners there must be malecontents, so weary of subjection, or so desirous of change, as to be ready to follow the standard of any protector. Full of those ideas, on which he began to form a scheme, that time, and more perfect information concerning the state of the country, enabled him to mature, he gave a most gracious reception to the Zempoallans, and promised soon to visit their cazique.*

Marches
to Zem-
poalla.

In order to perform this promise, it was not necessary to vary the route which he had

* B. Diaz. c. 41. Gomara Cron. c. 28.

already fixed for his march. Some officers, whom he had employed to survey the coast, having discovered a village named Quiabislan, about forty miles to the northward, which, both on account of the fertility of the soil, and commodiousness of the harbour, seemed to be a more proper station for a settlement than that where he was encamped, Cortes determined to remove thither. Zempoalla lay in his way, where the cazique received him in the manner which he had reason to expect; with gifts and caresses, like a man solicitous to gain his good-will; with respect approaching almost to adoration, like one who looked up to him as a deliverer. From him he learned many particulars with respect to the character of Montezuma, and the circumstances which rendered his dominion odious. He was a tyrant, as the cazique told him with tears, haughty, cruel, and suspicious; who treated his own subjects with arrogance, ruined the conquered provinces by excessive exactions, and often tore their sons and daughters from them by violence; the former to be offered as victims to his gods; the latter, to be reserved as concubines for himself or favourites. Cortes, in reply to him, artfully insinuated, that one great object of the Spaniards in visiting a country so remote from their own, was to redress grievances, and to relieve the oppressed; and having encouraged him to hope for this interposition in due time, he continued his march to Quiabislan.

Builds a
fort.

The spot which his officers had recommended as a proper situation, appeared to him to be so well chosen, that he immediately marked out ground for a town. The houses to be erected were only huts; but these were to be surrounded with fortifications, of sufficient strength to resist the assaults of an Indian army. As the finishing of those fortifications was essential to the existence of a co-

lony, and of no less importance in prosecuting the designs which the leader and his followers meditated, both in order to secure a place of retreat, and to preserve their communication with the sea, every man in the army, officers as well as soldiers, put his hand to the work, Cortes himself setting them an example of activity and perseverance in labour. The Indians of Zempoalla and Quiabislan lent their aid; and this petty station, the parent of so many mighty settlements, was soon in a state of defence.^y

Concludes While engaged in this necessary work, a formal Cortes had several interviews with the alliance caziques of Zempoalla and Quiabislan; and with several caziques. availing himself of their wonder and astonishment at the new objects which they daily beheld, he gradually inspired them with such a high opinion of the Spaniards, as beings of a superior order, and irresistible in arms, that, relying on their protection, they ventured to insult the Mexican power, at the very name of which they were accustomed to tremble. Some of Montezuma's officers having appeared to levy the usual tribute, and to demand a certain number of human victims, as an expiation for their guilt in presuming to hold intercourse with those strangers whom the emperor had commanded to leave his dominions, instead of obeying the order, the caziques made them prisoners, treated them with great indignity, and as their superstition was no less barbarous than that of the Mexicans, they prepared to sacrifice them to their gods. From this last danger they were delivered by the interposition of Cortes, who manifested the utmost horror at the mention of such a deed. The two caziques having now been pushed to an act of such open rebellion, as left them no hope of safety but in attaching themselves inviola-

^y B. Diaz. c. 45, 46, 48. Gomara Cron. c. 32, 33, 37. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 8, 9.

bly to the Spaniards, they soon completed their union with them, by formally acknowledging themselves to be vassals of the same monarch. Their example was followed by the Totonagues, a fierce people who inhabited the mountainous part of the country. They willingly subjected themselves to the crown of Castile, and offered to accompany Cortes, with all their forces, in his march towards Mexico.*

His measures to procure a confirmation of his authority by the king. Cortes had now been above three months in New Spain; and though this period had not been distinguished by martial exploits, every moment had been employed in operations, which, though less splendid, were more important. By his address in conducting his intrigues with his own army, as well as his sagacity in carrying on his negotiations with the natives, he had already laid the foundations of his future success. But whatever confidence he might place in the plan which he had formed, he could not but perceive, that as his title to command was derived from a doubtful authority, he held it by a precarious tenure. The injuries which Velasquez had received, were such as would naturally prompt him to apply for redress to their common sovereign; and such a representation, he foresaw, might be given of his conduct, that he had reason to apprehend, not only that he might be degraded from his present rank, but subjected to punishment. Before he began his march, it was necessary to take the most effectual precautions against this impending danger. With this view he persuaded the magistrates of the colony at Vera Cruz to address a letter to the king, the chief object of which was to justify their own conduct in establishing a colony independent on the jurisdiction of Velasquez. In order to accomplish this, they endeavoured to detract from his merit, in fitting out

the two former armaments under Cordova and Grijalva, affirming that these had been equipped by the adventurers who engaged in the expeditions, and not by the governor. They contended that the sole object of Velasquez was to trade or barter with the natives, not to attempt the conquest of New Spain, or to settle a colony there. They asserted that Cortes and the officers who served under him had defrayed the greater part of the expense in fitting out the armament. On this account, they humbly requested their sovereign to ratify what they had done in his name, and to confirm Cortes in the supreme command by his royal commission. That Charles might be induced to grant more readily what they demanded, they gave him a pompous description of the country which they had discovered; of its riches, the number of its inhabitants, their civilization and arts; they related the progress which they had already made in annexing some parts of the country situated on the sea-coast to the crown of Castile: and mentioned the schemes which they had formed, as well as the hopes which they entertained, of reducing the whole to subjection.* Cortes himself wrote in a similar strain; and as he knew that the Spanish court, accustomed to the exaggerated representations of every new country by its discoverers, would give little credit to their splendid accounts of New Spain, if these were not accompanied with such a specimen of what it contained, as would excite a high idea of its opulence, he solicited his soldiers to relinquish what they might claim as their part of the treasures

* In this letter it is asserted, that though a considerable number of Spaniards have been wounded in their various encounters with the people of Tabasco, not one of them died, and all had recovered in a very short time. This seems to confirm what I observe in p. 299, concerning the imperfection of the offensive weapons used by the Americans. In this letter, the human sacrifices offered by the Mexicans to their deities are described minutely, and with great horror; some of the Spaniards, it is said, had been eye-witnesses of those barbarous rites. To the letter is subjoined a catalogue and description of the presents sent to the emperor. That published by Gomara, Cron. c. 29, seems to have been copied from it. Pet. Martyr describes many of the articles in his treatise 'De Insulis nuper inventis,' p. 351, &c.

which had hitherto been collected, in order that the whole might be sent to the king. Such was the ascendant which he had acquired over their minds, and such their own romantic expectations of future wealth, that an army of indigent and rapacious adventurers was capable of this generous effort, and offered to their sovereign the richest present that had hitherto been transmitted from the New World.^b Portocarrero and Montejo, the chief magistrates of the colony, were appointed to carry this present to Castile, with express orders not to touch at Cuba in their passage thither.^c

A conspiracy
against
Cortes. While a vessel was preparing for their departure, an unexpected event occasioned a general alarm. Some soldiers and sailors secretly attached to Velasquez, or intimidated at the prospect of the dangers unavoidable in attempting to penetrate into the heart of a great empire with such unequal force, formed the design of seizing one of the brigantines, and making their escape to Cuba, in order to give the governor such intelligence as might enable him to intercept the ship which was to carry the treasure and dispatches to Spain. This conspiracy, though formed by persons of low rank, was conducted with profound secrecy; but at the moment when every thing was ready for execution, they were betrayed by one of their associates.

He de-
stroys his
fleet. Though the good fortune of Cortes interposed so seasonably on this occasion, the detection of this conspiracy filled his mind with most disquieting apprehensions, and prompted him to execute a scheme which he had long revolved. He perceived that the spirit of disaffection still lurked among his troops; that though hitherto checked by the uniform success of his schemes, or suppressed by the hand of authority, various events might occur

^b See NOTE LI.^c B. Diaz, c. 34. Gulara Cron. c. 19.

which would encourage and call it forth. He observed, that many of his men, weary of the fatigue of service, longed to revisit their settlements in Cuba ; and that upon any appearance of extraordinary danger, or any reverse of fortune, it would be impossible to restrain them from returning thither. He was sensible that his forces, already too feeble, could bear no diminution, and that a very small defection of his followers would oblige him to abandon the enterprise. After ruminating often, and with much solicitude, upon those particulars, he saw no hope of success, but in cutting off all possibility of retreat, and in reducing his men to the necessity of adopting the same resolution with which he himself was animated, either to conquer or to perish. With this view, he determined to destroy his fleet ; but as he durst not venture to execute such a bold resolution by his single authority, he laboured to bring his soldiers to adopt his ideas with respect to the propriety of this measure. His address in accomplishing this was not inferior to the arduous occasion in which it was employed. He persuaded some, that the ships had suffered so much by having been long at sea, as to be altogether unfit for service ; to others he pointed out what a seasonable reinforcement of strength they would derive from the junction of a hundred men, now unprofitably employed as sailors ; and to all he represented the necessity of fixing their eyes and wishes upon what was before them, without allowing the idea of a retreat once to enter their thoughts. With universal consent the ships were drawn ashore, and after stripping them of their sails, rigging, iron works, and whatever else might be of use, they were broke in pieces. Thus, from an effort of magnanimity, to which there is nothing parallel in history, five hundred men voluntarily consented to be shut up in a hostile country, filled with powerful and unknown

nations; and having precluded every means of escape, left themselves without any resource but their own valour and perseverance.^d

Nothing now retarded Cortes; the alacrity of his troops and the disposition of his allies were equally favourable. All the advantages, however, derived from the latter, though procured by much assiduity and address, were well nigh lost in a moment, by an indiscreet sally of religious zeal, which, on many occasions, precipitated Cortes into actions inconsistent with the prudence that distinguishes his character. Though hitherto he had neither time nor opportunity to explain to the natives the errors of their own superstition, or to instruct them in the principles of the Christian faith, he commanded his soldiers to overturn the altars and to destroy the idols in the chief temple of Zempoalla, and in their place to erect a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary. The people beheld this with astonishment and horror; the priests excited them to arms; but such was the authority of Cortes, and so great the ascendant which the Spaniards had acquired, that the commotion was appeased without bloodshed, and concord perfectly re-established.

Advances into the country Cortes began his march from Zempoalla, on the 16th of August, with five hundred men, fifteen horse, and six field-pieces. The rest of his troops, consisting chiefly of such as from age or infirmity were less fit for active service, he left as a garrison in Villa Rica, under the command of Escalante, an officer of merit, and warmly attached to his interest. The cazique of Zempoalla supplied him with provisions, and with two hundred of those Indians called *Tamemes*, whose office, in a country where tame animals were unknown, was to carry burdens, and to perform all servile labour. They were

^d Relat. de Cortes. Ramus, vi. 225. B. Diaz, c. 57, 58. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 14. B. Diaz, c. 11, 12. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 3, 4.

a great relief to the Spanish soldiers, who hitherto had been obliged, not only to carry their own baggage, but to drag along the artillery by main force. He offered likewise a considerable body of his troops, but Cortes was satisfied with four hundred ; taking care, however, to choose persons of such note, as might prove hostages for the fidelity of their master. Nothing memorable happened in his progress, until he arrived on the confines of Tlascala. The inhabitants of that province, a warlike people, were implacable enemies of the Mexicans, and had been united in an ancient alliance with the caziques of Zempoalla. Though less civilized than the subjects of Montezuma, they were advanced in improvement far beyond the rude nations of America, whose manners we have described. They had made considerable progress in agriculture ; they dwelt in large towns ; they were not strangers to some species of commerce ; and in the imperfect accounts of their institutions and laws, transmitted to us by the early Spanish writers, we discern traces both of distributive justice and of criminal jurisdiction in their interior police. But still, as the degree of their civilization was incomplete, and as they depended for subsistence not on agriculture alone, but trusted for it in a great measure to hunting, they retained many of the qualities natural to men in this state. Like them, they were fierce and revengeful ; like them, too, they were high-spirited and independent. In consequence of the former, they were involved in perpetual hostilities, and had but a slender and occasional intercourse with neighbouring states. The latter inspired them with such detestation of servitude, that they not only refused to stoop to a foreign yoke, and maintained an obstinate and successful contest in defence of their liberty against the superior power of the Mexican empire, but they guarded with equal solici-

tude against domestic tyranny; and disdaining to acknowledge any master, they lived under the mild and limited jurisdiction of a council elected by their several tribes.

His war
with the
Tlascalans. Cortes, though he had received information concerning the martial character of this people, flattered himself that his professions of delivering the oppressed from the tyranny of Montezuma, their inveterate enmity to the Mexicans, and the example of their ancient allies the Zempoallans, might induce the Tlascalans to grant him a friendly reception. In order to dispose them to this, four Zempoallans, of great eminence were sent ambassadors, to request, in his name, and in that of their cazique, that they would permit the Spaniards to pass through the territories of the republic, in their way to Mexico. But instead of the favourable answer which was expected, the Tlascalans seized the ambassadors, and without any regard to their public character, made preparations for sacrificing them to their gods. At the same time, they assembled their troops, in order to oppose those unknown invaders, if they should attempt to make their passage good by force of arms. Various motives concurred in precipitating the Tlascalans into this resolution. A fierce people, shut up within its own narrow precincts, and little accustomed to any intercourse with foreigners, is apt to consider every stranger as an enemy, and is easily excited to arms. They concluded, from Cortes's proposal of visiting Montezuma in his capital, that, notwithstanding all his professions, he courted the friendship of a monarch whom they both hated and feared. The imprudent zeal of Cortes in violating the temples in Zempoalla, filled the Tlascalans with horror; and as they were no less attached to their superstition than the other nations of New Spain, they were impatient to avenge their injured gods,

and to acquire the merit of offering up to them as victims, those impious men who had dared to profane their altars ; they contemned the small number of the Spaniards, as they had not yet measured their own strength with that of these new enemies, and had no idea of the superiority which they derived from their arms and discipline.

Aug. 30. ¹
Success of
it. Cortes, after waiting some days, in vain, for the return of his ambassadors, advanced

into the Tlascalan territories. As the resolutions of people who delight in war are executed with no less promptitude than they are formed, he found troops in the field ready to oppose him. They attacked him with great intrepidity, and, in the first encounter, wounded some of the Spaniards, and killed two horses ; a loss, in their situation, of great moment, because it was irreparable. From this specimen of their courage, Cortes saw the necessity of proceeding with caution. His army marched in close order ; he chose the stations where he halted, with attention, and fortified every camp with extraordinary care. During fourteen days he was exposed to almost uninterrupted assaults, the Tlascalans advancing with numerous armies, and renewing the attack in various forms, with a degree of valour and perseverance to which the Spaniards had seen nothing parallel in the New World. The Spanish historians describe those successive battles with great pomp, and enter into a minute detail of particulars, mingling many exaggerated and incredible circumstances,¹ with such as are real and marvellous. But no power of words can render the recital of a combat interesting, where there is no equality of danger ; and when the narrative closes with an account of thousands slain on the one side, while not a single person falls on the other, the most laboured descriptions of the

¹ See Note LII.

previous disposition of the troops, or of the various vicissitudes in the engagement, command no attention.

Some singular circumstances in it. There are some circumstances, however, in **this war**, which are memorable, and merit notice, as they throw light upon the character both of the people of New Spain, and of their conquerors. Though the Tlascalans brought into the field such numerous armies as appear sufficient to have overwhelmed the Spaniards, they were never able to make any impression upon their small battalion. Singular as this may seem, it is not inexplicable. The Tlascalans, though addicted to war, were, like all unpolished nations, strangers to military order and discipline, and lost in a great measure the advantage which they might have derived from their numbers, and the impetuosity of their attack, by their constant solicitude to carry off the dead and wounded. This point of honour, founded on a sentiment of tenderness natural to the human mind, and strengthened by anxiety to preserve the bodies of their countrymen from being devoured by their enemies, was universal among the people of New Spain. Attention to this pious office occupied them even during the heat of combat, broke their union, and diminished the force of the impression which they might have made by a joint effort.

Not only was their superiority in number of little avail, but the imperfection of their military weapons rendered their valour in a great measure inoffensive. After three battles, and many skirmishes and assaults, not one Spaniard was killed in the field. Arrows and spears, headed with flint or the bones of fishes, stakes hardened in the fire, and wooden swords, though destructive weapons among naked

Indians, were easily turned aside by the Spanish bucklers, and could hardly penetrate the *escaupiles*, or quilted jackets, which the soldiers wore. The Tlascalans advanced boldly to the charge, and often fought hand to hand. Many of the Spaniards were wounded, though all slightly, which cannot be imputed to any want of courage or strength in their enemies, but to the defect of the arms with which they assailed them.

Notwithstanding the fury with which the Tlascalans attacked the Spaniards, they seemed to have conducted their hostilities with some degree of barbarous generosity. They gave the Spaniards warning of their hostile intentions, and as they knew that their invaders wanted provisions, and imagined, perhaps, like the other Americans, that they had left their own country because it did not afford them subsistence, they sent to their camp a large supply of poultry and maize, desiring them to eat plentifully, because they scorned to attack an enemy enfeebled by hunger, and it would be an affront to their gods to offer them famished victims, as well as disagreeable to themselves to feed on such emaciated prey.^b

When they were taught by the first encounter with their new enemies, that it was not easy to execute this threat; when they perceived, in the subsequent engagements, that notwithstanding all the efforts of their own valour, of which they had a very high opinion, not one of the Spaniards was slain or taken, they began to conceive them to be a superior order of beings, against whom human power could not avail. In this extremity they had recourse to their priests, requiring them to reveal the mysterious causes of such extraordinary events, and to declare what new means they should employ in order to re-

^b Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vi. c. 6. Gomara Cron. c. 47

pulse those formidable invaders. The priests, after many sacrifices and incantations, delivered this response. That these strangers were the offspring of the sun, procreated by his animating energy in the regions of the east; that, by day, while cherished with the influence of his parental beams, they were invincible; but by night, when his reviving heat was withdrawn, their vigour declined and faded like the herbs in the field, and they dwindled down into mortal men.¹ Theories less plausible have gained credit with more enlightened nations, and have influenced their conduct. In consequence of this, the Tlascalans, with the implicit confidence of men who fancy themselves to be under the guidance of Heaven, acted in contradiction to one of their most established maxims in war, and ventured to attack the enemy, with a strong body, in the night-time, in hopes of destroying them when enfeebled and surprised. But Cortes had greater vigilance and discernment than to be deceived by the rude stratagems of an Indian army. The sentinels at his out-posts, observing some extraordinary movement among the Tlascalans, gave the alarm. In a moment the troops were under arms, and sallying out, dispersed the party with great slaughter, without allowing it to approach the camp. The Tlascalans, convinced by sad experience that their priests had deluded them, and satisfied that they attempted in vain, either to deceive or to vanquish their enemies, their fierceness abated, and they began to incline seriously to peace.

The Tlascalans disposed to peace They were at a loss, however, in what manner to address the strangers, what idea to form of their character, and whether to consider them as beings of a gentle or of a malevolent nature. There were circumstances in their conduct which seemed to favour each opinion. On the one

¹ B. Diaz. c. 66.

hand, as the Spaniards constantly dismissed the prisoners whom they took, not only without injury, but often with presents of European toys, and renewed their offers of peace after every victory; this lenity amazed people, who, according to the exterminating system of war known in America, were accustomed to sacrifice and devour without mercy all the captives taken in battle, and disposed them to entertain favourable sentiments of the humanity of their new enemies. But, on the other hand, as Cortes had seized fifty of their countrymen who brought provisions to his camp, and, supposing them to be spies, had cut off their hands;^k this bloody spectacle, added to the terror occasioned by the fire-arms and horses, filled them with dreadful impressions of the ferocity of their invaders.^l This uncertainty was apparent in the mode of addressing the Spaniards. "If," said they, "you are divinities of a cruel and savage nature, we present to you five slaves, that you may drink their blood and eat their flesh. If you are mild deities, accept an offering of incense and variegated plumes. If you are men, here is meat, and bread, and fruit to nourish you."^m The peace which both parties

Concluded now desired with equal ardour, was soon concluded. The Tlascalans yielded themselves as vassals to the crown of Castile, and engaged to assist Cortes in all his future operations. He took the republic under his protection, and promised to defend their persons and possessions from injury or violence.

Advantages of it to the Spaniards. This treaty was concluded at a seasonable juncture for the Spaniards. The fatigue of service among a small body of men, surrounded by such a multitude of enemies, was incredible. Half the army was on duty every night, and even they whose turn it was to rest, slept always upon their

^k Cortes Relat. Ramus. iii. 223 C. Gomara Cron. c. 48.

^l See NOTE LIII.

^m B. Diaz. c. 70. Gomara Cron. c. 47. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vi. c. 7.

arms, that they might be ready to run to their posts on a moment's warning. Many of them were wounded; a good number, and among these Cortes himself, laboured under the distempers prevalent in hot climates, and several had died since they set out from Vera Cruz. Notwithstanding the supplies which they had received from the Tlascalans, they were often in want of provisions, and so destitute of the necessities most requisite in dangerous service, that they had no salve to dress their wounds, but what was composed with the fat of the Indians, whom they had slain." Worn out with such intolerable toil and hardships, many of the soldiers began to murmur, and, when they reflected on the multitude and boldness of their enemies, more were ready to despair. It required the utmost exertion of Cortes's authority and address to check this spirit of despondency in its progress, and to reanimate his followers with their wonted sense of their own superiority over the enemies with whom they had to contend. The submission of the Tlascalans, and then own triumphant entry into the capital city, where they were received with the reverence paid to beings of a superior order, banished, at once, from the minds of the Spaniards, all memory of past sufferings, dispelled every anxious thought with respect to their future operations, and fully satisfied them that there was not now any power in America able to withstand their arms.

Cortes remained twenty days in Tlascala, in order to allow his troops a short interval of repose after such hard service. During that time he was employed in transactions and inquiries of great moment with respect to his future schemes. In his daily conferences with the Tlascalan chiefs, he received information concerning every particular re-

Cortes solicitous to gain their confidence.

ⁿ B. Diaz, c. 62-65
Gomara Cron. c. 31

^o Cortes Relat. Ramus, iii. 220 B. Diaz c. 66.
^p Cortes Relat. Ramus, iii. 250 B. Diaz c. 72

lative to the state of the Mexican empire, or to the qualities of its sovereign, which could be of use in regulating his conduct, whether he should be obliged to act as a friend or as an enemy. As he found that the antipathy of his new allies to the Mexican nation was no less implacable than had been represented, and perceived what benefit he might derive from the aid of such powerful confederates, he employed all his powers of insinuation in order to gain their confidence. Nor was any extraordinary exertion of these necessary. The Tlascalans, with the levity of mind natural to unpolished men, were, of their own accord, disposed to run from the extreme of hatred to that of fondness. Every thing in the appearance and conduct of their guests, was to them matter of wonder.^a They gazed with admiration at whatever the Spaniards did, and fancying them to be of heavenly origin, were eager not only to comply with their demands, but to anticipate their wishes. They offered, accordingly, to accompany Cortes in his march to Mexico, with all the forces of the republic, under the command of their most experienced captains.

Which he
had almost
lost by his
rash zeal

But, after bestowing so much pains on cementing this union, all the beneficial fruits of it were on the point of being lost, by an effusion of that intemperate religious zeal with which Cortes was animated, no less than the other adventurers of the age. They all considered themselves as instruments employed by Heaven to propagate the Christian faith, and the less they were qualified, either by their knowledge or morals, for such a function, they were more eager to discharge it. The profound veneration of the Tlascalans for the Spaniards, having encouraged Cortes to explain to some of their chiefs the doctrines of the Christian religion, and to insist that they should abandon their own

superstitions, and embrace the faith of their new friends, they, according to an idea universal among barbarous nations, readily acknowledged the truth and excellence of what he taught; but contended, that the *Teules* of Tlascala were divinities no less than the god in whom the Spaniards believed, and as that being was entitled to the homage of Europeans, so they were bound to revere the same powers which their ancestors had worshipped. Cortes continued, nevertheless, to urge his demand in a tone of authority, mingling threats with his arguments, until the Tlascalans could bear it no longer, and conjured him never to mention this again, lest the gods should avenge on their heads the guilt of having listened to such a proposition. Cortes, astonished and enraged at their obstinacy, prepared to execute by force, what he could not accomplish by persuasion, and was going to overturn their altars, and cast down their idols with the same violent hand as at Zempoalla, if father Bartholomew de Olmedo, chaplain to the expedition, had not checked his inconsiderate impetuosity. He represented the imprudence of such an attempt in a large city newly reconciled, and filled with people no less superstitious than warlike; he declared, that the proceeding at Zempoalla had always appeared to him precipitate and unjust, that religion was not to be propagated by the sword, or infidels to be converted by violence, that other weapons were to be employed in this ministry—patient instruction must enlighten the understanding, and pious example captivate the heart, before men could be induced to abandon error, and embrace the truth. Amidst scenes, where a narrow-minded bigotry appears in such close union with oppression and cruelty, sentiments so liberal and humane soothe the mind with unexpected pleasure, and at a time when the rights

of conscience were little understood in the Christian world, and the idea of toleration unknown, one is astonished to find a Spanish monk of the sixteenth century among the first advocates against persecution, and in behalf of religious liberty. The remonstrances of an ecclesiastic, no less respectable for wisdom than virtue, had their proper weight with Cortes. He left the Tlascalans in the undisturbed exercise of their own rites, requiring only that they should desist from their horrid practice of offering human victims in sacrifice.

Advances
to Cholula.

Cortes, as soon as his troops were fit for service, resolved to continue his march towards Mexico, notwithstanding the earnest dissuaves of the Tlascalans, who represented his destruction as unavoidable, if he put himself in the power of a prince so faithless and cruel as Montezuma. As he was accompanied by six thousand Tlascalans, he had now the command of forces which resembled a regular army. They directed their course to-
Oct. 13 wards Cholula; Montezuma, who had at length consented to admit the Spaniards into his presence, having informed Cortes, that he had given orders for his friendly reception there. Cholula was a considerable town, and though only five leagues distant from Tlascala, was formerly an independent state, but had been lately subjected to the Mexican empire. This was considered by all the people of New Spain as a holy place, the sanctuary and chief seat of their gods, to which pilgrims resorted from every province, and a greater number of human victims were offered in its principal temple than even in that of Mexico. Montezuma seems to have invited the Spaniards thither, either from some superstitious hope that the gods would not suffer this

* Torquemada Monar. Ind. l. 261, 262, u. 264. Gomara Cron. c. 61. Herrera
acc. 2 lib. viii. c. 2.

sacred mansion to be defiled, without pouring down their wrath upon those impious strangers, who ventured to insult their power in **the** place of its peculiar residence; or from a belief that he himself might there attempt to cut them off with more certain success, under the immediate protection of his divinities.

The severity of his procedure there.

Cortes had been warned by the Tlascalans, before he set out on his march, to keep a watchful eye over the Cholulans. He himself, though received into the town with much seeming respect and cordiality, observed several circumstances in their conduct which excited suspicion. Two of the Tlascalans, who were encamped at some distance from the town, as the Cholulans refused to admit their ancient enemies within its precincts, having found means to enter in disguise, acquainted Cortes, that they observed the women and children of the principal citizens retiring in great hurry every night; and that six children had been sacrificed in the chief temple, a rite which indicated the execution of some warlike enterprise to be approaching. At the same time, Marina the interpreter received information from an Indian woman of distinction, whose confidence she had gained, that the destruction of her friends was concerted; that a body of Mexican troops lay concealed near the town, that some of the streets were barricaded, and in others, pits or deep trenches were dug, and slightly covered over, as traps into which the horses might fall; that stones or massive weapons were collected on the tops of the temples, with which to overwhelm the infantry; that the fatal hour was now at hand, and their ruin unavoidable. Cortes, alarmed at this concurring evidence, secretly arrested three of the chief priests, and extorted from them a confession, that confirmed the intelligence which he had received. As not a

moment was to be lost, he instantly resolved to prevent his enemies, and to inflict on them such dreadful vengeance as might strike Montezuma and his subjects with terror. For this purpose, the Spaniards and Zempoallans were drawn up in a large court, which had been allotted for their quarters near the centre of the town; the Tlascalans had orders to advance; the magistrates, and several of the chief citizens were sent for, under various pretexts, and seized. On a signal given, the troops rushed out, and fell upon the multitude, destitute of leaders, and so much astonished, that the weapons dropping from their hands, they stood motionless, and incapable of defence. While the Spaniards pressed them in front, the Tlascalans attacked them in the rear. The streets were filled with bloodshed and death. The temples, which afforded a retreat to the priests and some of the leading men, were set on fire, and they perished in the flames. This scene of horror continued two days; during which, the wretched inhabitants suffered all that the destructive rage of the Spaniards, or the implacable revenge of their Indian allies, could inflict. At length the carnage ceased, after the slaughter of six thousand Cholulans, without the loss of a single Spaniard. Cortes then released the magistrates, and reproaching them bitterly for their intended treachery, declared, that as justice was now appeased, he forgave the offence, but required them to recall the citizens who had fled, and re-establish order in the town. Such was the ascendant which the Spaniards had acquired over this superstitious race of men, and so deeply were they impressed with an opinion of their superior discernment, as well as power, that, in obedience to this command, the city was in a few days filled again with people, who, amidst the ruins of their sacred buildings, yielded respectful service to men whose hands were stained

with the blood of their relations and fellow-citizens.[†]

Oct. 29. From Cholula, Cortes advanced directly to-
 Advances towards Mexico, wards Mexico, which was only twenty leagues distant. In every place through which he passed, he was received as a person possessed of sufficient power to deliver the empire from the oppression under which it groaned; and the caziques or governors communicated to him all the grievances which they felt under the tyrannical government of Montezuma, with that unreserved confidence which men naturally repose in superior beings. When Cortes first observed the seeds of discontent in the remote provinces of the empire, hope dawned upon his mind; but when he now discovered such symptoms of alienation from their monarch near the seat of government, he concluded that the vital parts of the constitution were affected, and conceived the most sanguine expectations of overturning a state, whose natural strength was thus divided and impaired. While those reflections encouraged the general to persist in his arduous undertaking, the soldiers were no less animated by observations more obvious to their capacity. In descending from the mountains of Chalco, across which the road lay, the vast plain of Mexico opened gradually to their
 First view of it. view. When they first beheld this prospect, one of the most striking and beautiful on the face of the earth; when they observed fertile and cultivated fields, stretching farther than the eye could reach; when they saw a lake resembling the sea in extent, encompassed with large towns, and discovered the capital city rising upon an island in the middle, adorned with its temples, and towers; the scene so far exceeded their imagination, that some believed

[†] Cortes Relat. Rues, c. 251. B. Diaz, c. 10. G. Santa Cruz, c. 94. Henry, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 1, &c. See Note IV.

the fanciful descriptions of romance were realized, and that its enchanted palaces and gilded domes were presented to their sight; others could hardly persuade themselves that this wonderful spectacle was any thing more than a dream." As they advanced, their doubts were removed, but their amazement increased. They were now fully satisfied that the country was rich beyond any conception which they had formed of it, and flattered themselves that at length they should obtain an ample recompense for all their services and sufferings.

The irre-
solution
of Monte-
zuma.

Hitherto they had met with no enemy to oppose their progress, though several circumstances occurred which led them to suspect that some design was formed to surprise and cut them off. Many messengers arrived successively from Montezuma, permitting them one day to advance, requiring them on the next to retire, as his hopes or fears alternately prevailed; and so wonderful was this infatuation, which seems to be unaccountable on any supposition but that of a superstitious dread of the Spaniards, as beings of a superior nature, that Cortes was almost at the gates of the capital, before the monarch had determined whether to receive him as a friend, or to oppose him as an enemy. But as no sign of open hostility appeared, the Spaniards, without regarding the fluctuations of Montezuma's sentiments, continued their march along the causeway which led to Mexico through the lake, with great circumspection and the strictest discipline, though without seeming to suspect the prince whom they were about to visit.

His first
interview
with the
Spaniards.

When they drew near the city, about a thousand persons, who appeared to be of distinction, came forth to meet them, adorned with plumes, and clad in mantles of fine cotton.

Each of these, in his order, passed by Cortes, and saluted him according to the mode deemed most respectful and submissive in their country. They announced the approach of Montezuma himself, and soon after his harbingers came in sight. There appeared first two hundred persons in a uniform dress, with large plumes of feathers, alike in fashion, marching two and two, in deep silence, barefooted, with their eyes fixed on the ground. These were followed by a company of higher rank, in their most showy apparel, in the midst of whom was Montezuma, in a chair or litter richly ornamented with gold, and feathers of various colours. Four of his principal favourites carried him on their shoulders, others supported a canopy of curious workmanship over his head. Before him marched three officers with rods of gold in their hands, which they lifted up on high at certain intervals, and at that signal all the people bowed their heads, and hid their faces, as unworthy to look on so great a monarch. When he drew near, Cortes dismounted, advancing towards him with officious haste, and in a respectful posture. At the same time Montezuma alighted from his chair, and leaning on the arms of two of his near relations, approached with a slow and stately pace, his attendants covering the street with cotton cloths, that he might not touch the ground. Cortes accosted him with profound reverence, after the European fashion. He returned the salutation, according to the mode of his country, by touching the earth with his hand, and then kissing it. This ceremony, the customary expression of veneration from inferiors towards those who were above them in rank, appeared such amazing condescension in a proud monarch, who scarcely deigned to consider the rest of mankind as of the same species with himself, that all his subjects firmly believed those persons, before whom he humbled himself in this

manner, to be something more than human. Accordingly as they marched through the crowd, the Spaniards frequently, and with much satisfaction, heard themselves denominated *Teules*, or divinities. Nothing material passed in this first interview. Montezuma conducted Cortes to the quarters which he had prepared for his reception, and immediately took leave of him, with a politeness not unworthy of a court more refined. "You are now," says he, "with your brothers in your own house; refresh yourselves after your fatigue, and be happy until I return." The place allotted to the Spaniards for their lodging was a house built by the father of Montezuma. It was surrounded by a stone wall, with towers at proper distances, which served for defence as well as for ornament, and its apartments and courts were so large, as to accommodate both the Spaniards and their Indian allies. The first care of Cortes was to take precautions for his security, by planting the artillery so as to command the different avenues which led to it, by appointing a large division of his troops to be always on guard, and by posting sentinels at proper stations, with injunctions to observe the same vigilant discipline as if they were within sight of an enemy's camp.

His idea of
the Spaniards. In the evening, Montezuma returned to visit his guests with the same pomp as in their first interview, and brought presents of such

value, not only to Cortes and to his officers, but even to the private men, as proved the liberality of the monarch to be suitable to the opulence of his kingdom. A long conference ensued, in which Cortes learned what was the opinion of Montezuma with respect to the Spaniards. It was an established tradition, he told him, among the Mexicans, that their ancestors

* Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 232—235 B. Diaz. c. 63—88. Gomara Cron. c. 64, 65. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 3—5.

came originally from a remote region, and conquered the provinces now subject to his dominion; that after they were settled there, the great captain who conducted this colony returned to his own country, promising that at some future period his descendants should visit them, assume the government, and reform their constitution and laws; that from what he had heard and seen of Cortes and his followers, he was convinced that they were the very persons whose appearance the Mexican traditions and prophecies taught them to expect; that accordingly he had received them, not as strangers, but as relations of the same blood and parentage, and desired that they might consider themselves as masters in his dominions, for both himself and his subjects should be ready to comply with their will, and even to prevent their wishes. Cortes made a reply in his usual style, with respect to the dignity and power of his sovereign, and his intention in sending him into that country; artfully endeavouring so to frame his discourse, that it might coincide as much as possible with the idea which Montezuma had formed concerning the origin of the Spaniards. Next morning, Cortes and some of his principal attendants were admitted to a public audience of the emperor. The three subsequent days were employed in viewing the city; the appearance of which, so far superior in the order of its buildings and the number of its inhabitants to any place the Spaniards had beheld in America, and yet so little resembling the structure of a European city, filled them with surprise and admiration.

Mexico, or *Tenuchtitlan*, as it was anciently called by the natives, is situated in a large plain, environed by mountains of such height, that, though within the torrid zone, the temperature of its climate is mild and healthful. All the moisture which descends from the high grounds is collected in several lakes, the two

largest of which, of about ninety miles in circuit, communicate with each other. The waters of the one are fresh, those of the other brackish. On the banks of the latter, and on some small islands adjoining to them, the capital of Montezuma's empire was built. The access to the city was by artificial causeways or streets formed of stones and earth, about thirty feet in breadth. As the waters of the lake during the rainy season overflowed the flat country, these causeways were of considerable length. That of Tacuba, on the west, extended a mile and a half; that of Tepeaca,* on the north-west, three miles; that of Cuoyacan, towards the south, six miles. On the east there was no causeway, and the city could be approached only by canoes.† In each of these causeways were openings at proper intervals, through which the waters flowed, and over these beams of timber were laid, which being covered with earth, the causeway or street had every where a uniform appearance. As the approaches to the city were singular, its construction was remarkable. Not only the temples of their gods, but the houses belonging to the monarch, and to persons of distinction, were of such dimensions, that, in comparison with any other buildings which had been hitherto discovered in America, they might be termed magnificent. The habitations of the common people were mean, resembling the huts of other Indians. But they were all placed in a regular manner, on the banks of the canals which passed through the city, in some of its districts, or on the sides of the streets which intersected it in other quarters. In several places were large open-

* I am indebted to M. Clavigero for correcting an error of importance in my description of Mexico. From the east, where Tezeuco was situated, there was no causeway, as I have observed, and yet by some inattention on my part, or on that of the printer, in all the former editions one of the causeways was said to lead to Tezeuco. M. Clavigero's measurement of the length of these causeways differs somewhat from that which I have adopted from F. Torribio. Clavig. ii p. 72.

† F. Torribio MS.

ings or squares, one of which, allotted for the great market, is said to have been so spacious, that forty or fifty thousand persons carried on traffic there. In this city, the pride of the New World,* and the noblest monument of the industry and art of man, while unacquainted with the use of iron, and destitute of aid from any domestic animal, the Spaniards, who are most moderate in their computations, reckon that there were at least sixty thousand inhabitants.

But how much soever the novelty of those objects might amuse or astonish the Spaniards, they felt the utmost solicitude with respect to their own situation. From a concurrence of circumstances, no less unexpected than favourable to their progress, they had been allowed to penetrate into the heart of a powerful kingdom, and were now lodged in its capital without having once met with open opposition from its monarch. The Tlascalans, however, had earnestly dissuaded them from placing such confidence in Montezuma, as to enter a city of such peculiar situation as Mexico, where that prince would have them at mercy, shut up as it were in a snare, from which it was impossible to escape. They assured them that the Mexican priests had, in the name of the gods, counselled their sovereign to admit the Spaniards into the capital, that he might cut them off there at one blow with perfect security.† They now perceived too plainly, that the apprehensions of their allies were not destitute of foundation. that, by breaking the bridges placed at certain intervals on the causeways, or by destroying part of the causeways themselves, their retreat would be rendered impracticable, and they must remain cooped up in the centre of a hostile city, surrounded by multitudes sufficient to overwhelm them, and without a

* Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 239 D. Relat. de la gran Citta de Mexico, par un Gentilhomme del Cortes Ram. ibid. 304. E. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 11, &c.

† B. Diaz. c. 83, 86.

possibility of receiving aid from their allies. Montezuma had, indeed, received them with distinguished respect. But ought they to reckon upon this as real, or to consider it as feigned? Even if it were sincere, could they promise on its continuance? Their safety depended upon the will of a monarch in whose attachment they had no reason to confide; and an order flowing from his caprice, or a word uttered by him in passion, might decide irrevocably concerning their fate.^b

Solicitude and perplexity of Cortes. These reflections, so obvious as to occur to the meanest soldier, did not escape the vigilant sagacity of their general. Before he set out from Cholula, Cortes had received advice from Villa Rica,^c that Qualpopoca, one of the Mexican generals on the frontiers, having assembled an army in order to attack some of the people whom the Spaniards had encouraged to throw off the Mexican yoke, Escalante had marched out with part of the garrison to support his allies; that an engagement had ensued, in which, though the Spaniards were victorious, Escalante, with seven of his men, had been mortally wounded, his horse killed, and one Spaniard had been surrounded by the enemy and taken alive; that the head of this unfortunate captive, after being carried in triumph to different cities, in order to convince the people that their invaders were not immortal, had been sent to Mexico.^d Cortes, though alarmed with this intelligence, as an indication of Montezuma's hostile intentions, had continued his march. But as soon as he entered Mexico, he became sensible, that, from an excess of confidence in the superior valour and discipline of his troops, as well as from the disadvantage of having nothing to guide him in an unknown country, but the defective intelligence

^b B. Díaz. c. 94.^c Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 235. C.^d B. Díaz. c. 93, 94. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. viii. c. 1.

which he had received from people with whom his mode of communication was very imperfect, he had pushed forward into a situation, where it was difficult to continue, and from which it was dangerous to retire. Disgrace, and perhaps ruin, was the certain consequence of attempting the latter. The success of his enterprise depended upon supporting the high opinion which the people of New Spain had formed with respect to the irresistible power of his arms. Upon the first symptom of timidity on his part, their veneration would cease, and Montezuma, whom fear alone restrained at present, would let loose upon him the whole force of his empire. At the same time, he knew that the countenance of his own sovereign was to be obtained only by a series of victories, and that nothing but the merit of extraordinary success could screen his conduct from the censure of irregularity. From all these considerations, it was necessary to maintain his station, and to extricate himself out of the difficulties in which one bold step had involved him, by venturing upon another still bolder. The situation was trying, but his mind was equal to it; and after revolving the matter with deep attention, he fixed upon a plan no less extraordinary than daring. He determined to seize Montezuma in his palace, and to carry him as a prisoner to the Spanish quarters. From the superstitious veneration of the Mexicans for the person of their monarch, as well as their implicit submission to his will, he hoped, by having Montezuma in his power, to acquire the supreme direction of their affairs; or, at least, with such a sacred pledge in his hands, he made no doubt of being secure from any effort of their violence.

Resolves to
seize Mon-
tezuma.

His man-
ner of ex-
ecuting
this.

This he immediately proposed to his officers. The timid startled at a measure so audacious, and raised objections. The more intelligent

and resolute, conscious that it was the only resource in which there appeared any prospect of safety, warmly approved of it, and brought over their companions so cordially to the same opinion, that it was agreed instantly to make the attempt. At his usual hour of visiting Montezuma, Cortes went to the palace, accompanied by Alvarado, Sandoval, Lugo, Velasquez de Leon, and Davila, five of his principal officers, and as many trusty soldiers. Thirty chosen men followed, not in regular order, but sauntering at some distance, as if they had no object but curiosity; small parties were posted at proper intervals, in all the streets leading from the Spanish quarters to the court; and the remainder of his troops, with the Tlascalan allies, were under arms ready to sally out on the first alarm. Cortes and his attendants were admitted without suspicion; the Mexicans retiring, as usual, out of respect. He addressed the monarch in a tone very different from that which he had employed in former conferences, reproaching him bitterly as the author of the violent assault made upon the Spaniards by one of his officers, and demanded public reparation for the loss which they had sustained by the death of some of their companions, as well as for the insult offered to the great prince whose servants they were. Montezuma, confounded at this unexpected accusation, and changing colour, either from consciousness of guilt, or from feeling the indignity with which he was treated, asserted his own innocence with great earnestness, and, as a proof of it, gave orders instantly to bring Qualpopoca and his accomplices prisoners to Mexico. Cortes replied, with seeming complaisance, that a declaration so respectable left no doubt remaining in his own mind, but that something more was requisite to satisfy his followers, who would never be convinced that Montezuma did not harbour hostile intentions against

them, unless, as an evidence of his confidence and attachment, he removed from his own palace, and took up his residence in the Spanish quarters, where he should be served and honoured as became a great monarch. The first mention of so strange a proposal bereaved Montezuma of speech, and almost of motion. At length, indignation gave him utterance, and he haughtily answered, "That persons of his rank were not accustomed voluntarily to give up themselves as prisoners; and were he mean enough to do so, his subjects would not permit such an affront to be offered to their sovereign." Cortes, unwilling to employ force, endeavoured alternately to soothe and to intimidate him. The altercation became warm; and having continued above three hours, Velasquez de Leon, an impetuous and gallant young man, exclaimed with impatience, "Why waste more time in vain? Let us either seize him instantly, or stab him to the heart." The threatening voice and fierce gestures with which these words were uttered, struck Montezuma. The Spaniards, he was sensible, had now proceeded so far, as left him no hope that they would recede. His own danger was imminent, the necessity unavoidable. He saw both, and abandoning himself to his fate, complied with their request.

His officers were called. He communi-
cated to them his resolution. Though asto-
nished and afflicted, they presumed not to
question the will of their master, but carried
him in silent pomp, all bathed in tears, to the Spanish
quarters. When it was known that the strangers
were conveying away the emperor, the people broke
out into the wildest transports of grief and rage,
threatening the Spaniards with immediate destruc-
tion, as the punishment justly due to their impious
audacity. But as soon as Montezuma appeared with
a seeming gaiety of countenance, and waved his hand,

Montezu-
ma carried
to the
Spanish
quarters.

the tumult was hushed, and upon his declaring it to be of his own choice that he went to reside for some time among his new friends, the multitude, taught to revere every intimation of their sovereign's pleasure, quietly dispersed.*

Thus was a powerful prince seized by a few strangers in the midst of his capital, at noonday, and carried off as a prisoner without opposition or bloodshed. History contains nothing parallel to this event, either with respect to the temerity of the attempt, or the success of the execution; and were not all the circumstances of this extraordinary transaction authenticated by the most unquestionable evidence, they would appear so wild and extravagant, as to go far beyond the bounds of that probability which must be preserved even in fictitious narrations.

Received with apparent respect. Montezuma was received in the Spanish quarters with all the ceremonious respect which Cortes had promised. He was attended by his own domestics, and served with his usual state. His principal officers had free access to him, and he carried on every function of government as if he had been at perfect liberty. The Spaniards, however, watched him with the scrupulous vigilance which was natural in guarding such an important prize, endeavouring at the same time to soothe and reconcile him to his situation, by every external demonstration of regard and attachment. But from captive princes the hour of humiliation and suffering is never far distant. Qualpopoca, his son, and five of the principal officers who served under him, were brought prisoners to the capital, in consequence of the orders which Montezuma had issued. The emperor gave them up to Cortes, that he might in-

Subjected to cruel indignities.
Dec. 4.

* B. Diaz. c. 93. Gomara Cron. c. 83. Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. p. 233, 236.
Herrera, dec. 2. lib. viii. c. 2, 3. 'See Note I.VII.

quire into the nature of their crime, and determine their punishment. They were formally tried by a Spanish court-martial; and though they had acted no other part than what became loyal subjects and brave men, in obeying the orders of their lawful sovereign, and in opposing the invaders of their country, they were condemned to be burnt alive. The execution of such atrocious deeds is seldom long suspended. The unhappy victims were instantly led forth. The pile on which they were laid was composed of the weapons collected in the royal magazine for the public defence. An innumerable multitude of Mexicans beheld, in silent astonishment, the double insult offered to the majesty of their empire, an officer of distinction committed to the flames by the authority of strangers, for having done what he owed in duty to his natural sovereign; and the arms provided by the foresight of their ancestors for avenging public wrongs, consumed before their eyes.

But these were not the most shocking indignities which the Mexicans had to bear. The Spaniards, convinced that Qualpopoca would not have ventured to attack Escalante without orders from his master, were not satisfied with inflicting vengeance on the instrument employed in committing that crime, while the author of it escaped with impunity. Just before Qualpopoca was led out to suffer, Cortes entered the apartment of Montezuma, followed by some of his officers, and a soldier carrying a pair of fetters; and approaching the monarch with a stern countenance told him, that as the persons who were now to undergo the punishment which they merited, had charged him as the cause of the outrage committed, it was necessary that he likewise should make atonement for that guilt; then turning away abruptly, without waiting for a reply, commanded the soldiers to clap the fetters on his legs. The orders were instantly executed.

The disconsolate monarch, trained up with an idea that his person was sacred and inviolable, and considering this profanation of it as the prelude of immediate death, broke out into loud lamentations and complaints. His attendants, speechless with horror, fell at his feet, bathing them with their tears; and bearing up the fetters in their hands, endeavoured with officious tenderness to lighten their pressure. Nor did their grief and despondency abate, until Cortes returned from the execution, and with a cheerful countenance ordered the fetters to be taken off. As Montezuma's spirits had sunk with unmanly dejection, they now rose into indecent joy; and with an unbecoming transition, he passed at once from the anguish of despair to transports of gratitude and expressions of fondness towards his deliverer.

Reasons of
Cortes's
conduct. In those transactions, as represented by the Spanish historians, we search in vain for the qualities which distinguish other parts of Cortes's conduct. To usurp a jurisdiction which could not belong to a stranger, who assumed no higher character than that of an ambassador from a foreign prince, and under colour of it, to inflict a capital punishment on men whose conduct entitled them to esteem, appears an act of barbarous cruelty. To put the monarch of a great kingdom in irons, and, after such ignominious treatment, suddenly to release him, seems to be a display of power no less inconsiderate than wanton. According to the common relation no account can be given either of the one action or the other, but that Cortes, intoxicated with success, and presuming on the ascendant which he had acquired over the minds of the Mexicans, thought nothing too bold for him to undertake, or too dangerous to execute. But, in one view, these proceedings, however repugnant to justice and humanity, may have flowed from that artful policy which regulated

every part of Cortes's behaviour towards the Mexicans. They had conceived the Spaniards to be an order of beings superior to men. It was of the utmost consequence to cherish this illusion, and to keep up the veneration which it inspired. Cortes wished that shedding the blood of a Spaniard should be deemed the most heinous of all crimes; and nothing appeared better calculated to establish this opinion, than to condemn the first Mexicans who had ventured to commit it to a cruel death, and to oblige their monarch himself to submit to a mortifying indignity, as an expiation for being accessory to a deed so atrocious.^a

1520.
The power
which
Cortes ac-
quired.

The rigour with which Cortes punished the unhappy persons who first presumed to lay violent hands upon his followers, seems accordingly to have made all the impression that he desired. The spirit of Montezuma was not only overawed, but subdued. During six months that Cortes remained in Mexico, the monarch continued in the Spanish quarters, with an appearance of as entire satisfaction and tranquillity, as if he had resided there, not from constraint, but through choice. His ministers and officers attended him as usual. He took cognizance of all affairs; every order was issued in his name. The external aspect of government appearing the same, and all its ancient forms being scrupulously observed, the people were so little sensible of any change, that they obeyed the mandates of their monarch with the same submissive reverence as ever. Such was the dread which both Montezuma and his subjects had of the Spaniards, or such the veneration in which they held them, that no attempt was made to deliver their sovereign from confinement; and though Cortes, relying on this ascendant which he had acquired over their minds, permitted him not

^a See Note LAMII

only to visit his temples, but to make hunting excursions beyond the lake, a guard of a few Spaniards carried with it such a terror as to intimidate the multitude, and secure the captive monarch.^b

Thus, by the fortunate temerity of Cortes in seizing Montezuma, the Spaniards at once secured to themselves more extensive authority in the Mexican empire than it was possible to have acquired in a long course of time by open force; and they exercised more absolute sway in the name of another than they could have done in their own. The arts of polished nations, in subjecting such as are less improved, have been nearly the same in every period. The system of screening a foreign usurpation, under the sanction of authority derived from the natural rulers of a country, the device of employing the magistrates and forms already established as instruments to introduce a new dominion, of which we are apt to boast as sublime refinements in policy peculiar to the present age, were inventions of a more early period, and had been tried with success in the West, long before they were practised in the East.

Use which he makes of it. Cortes availed himself to the utmost of the power which he possessed by being able to act in the name of Montezuma. He sent some Spaniards, whom he judged best qualified for such commissions, into different parts of the empire, accompanied by persons of distinction, whom Montezuma appointed to attend them both as guides and protectors. They visited most of the provinces, viewed their soil and productions, surveyed with particular care the districts which yielded gold or silver, pitched upon several places as proper stations for future colonies, and endeavoured to prepare the minds of the people for submitting to the Spanish yoke. While they were thus employed,

^b Cortes Relat. p. 236. E. B. Diaz, c. 97.—99.

Cortes, in the name and by the authority of Montezuma, degraded some of the principal officers in the empire, whose abilities or independent spirit excited his jealousy, and substituted in their place persons less capable or more obsequious.

One thing still was wanting to complete his security. He wished to have such command of the lake as might ensure a retreat if either from levity or disgust, the Mexicans should take arms against him, and break down the bridges or causeways. This, too, his own address, and the facility of Montezuma, enabled him to accomplish. Having frequently entertained his prisoner with pompous accounts of the European marine and art of navigation, he awakened his curiosity to see those moving palaces which made their way through the water without oars. Under pretext of gratifying this desire, Cortes persuaded Montezuma to appoint some of his subjects to fetch part of the naval stores which the Spaniards had deposited at Vera Cruz to Mexico, and to employ others in cutting down and preparing timber. With their assistance, the Spanish carpenters soon completed two brigantines, which afforded a frivolous amusement to the monarch, and were considered by Cortes as a certain resource, if he should be obliged to retire.

Encouraged by so many instances of the monarch's tame submission to his will, Cortes ventured to put it to a proof still more trying. He urged Montezuma to acknowledge himself a vassal of the king of Castile, to hold his crown of him as superior, and to subject his dominions to the payment of an annual tribute. With this requisition, the last and most humbling that can be made to one possessed of sovereign authority, Montezuma was so obsequious as to comply. He called together the chief men of his empire, and in a solemn

Montezuma acknowledges himself a vassal of Spain.

harangue, reminding them of the traditions and prophecies which led them to expect the arrival of a people sprung from the same stock with themselves, in order to take possession of the supreme power, he declared his belief that the Spaniards were this promised race; that therefore he recognised the right of their monarch to govern the Mexican empire; that he would lay his crown at his feet, and obey him as a tributary. While uttering these words, Montezuma discovered how deeply he was affected in making such a sacrifice. Tears and groans frequently interrupted his discourse. Overawed and broken as his spirit was, it still retained such a sense of dignity, as to feel that pang which pierces the heart of princes when constrained to resign independent power. The first mention of such a resolution struck the assembly dumb with astonishment. This was followed by a sudden murmur of sorrow, mingled with indignation, which indicated some violent eruption of rage to be near at hand. This Cortes foresaw, and seasonably interposed to prevent it, by declaring that his master had no intention to deprive Montezuma of the royal dignity, or to make any innovation upon the constitution and laws of the Mexican empire. This assurance added to their dread of the Spanish power, and to the authority of their monarch's example, extorted a reluctant consent from the assembly.¹ The act of submission and homage was executed with all the formalities which the Spaniards were pleased to prescribe.²

The amount of the treasure collected by the Spaniards. Montezuma, at the desire of Cortes, accompanied this profession of fealty and homage with a magnificent present to his new sovereign; and after his example, his subjects brought in very liberal contributions. The

¹ See Note LIX.

² Cortes Relat. 238. D. B. Diaz. c. 101. Gomara Cron. c. 92. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 4.

Spaniards now collected all the treasure which had been either voluntarily bestowed upon them at different times by Montezuma, or had been extorted from his people under various pretexts; and having melted the gold and silver, the value of these, without including jewels and ornaments of various kinds, which were preserved on account of their curious workmanship, amounted to six hundred thousand *pesos*. The soldiers were impatient to have it divided, and Cortes complied with their desire. A fifth of the whole was first set apart as the tax due to the king. Another fifth was allotted to Cortes as commander-in-chief. The sums advanced by Velasquez, by Cortes, and by some of the officers, towards defraying the expense of fitting out the armament, were then deducted. The remainder was divided among the army, including the garrison of Vera Cruz, in proportion to their different ranks. After so many defalcations, the share of a private man did not exceed a hundred pesos. This sum fell so far below their sanguine expectations, that some soldiers rejected it with scorn, and others murmured so loudly at this cruel disappointment of their hopes, that it required all the address of Cortes, and no small exertion of his liberality, to appease them. The complaints of the army were not altogether destitute of foundation. As the crown had contributed nothing towards the equipment or success of the armament, it was not without regret that the soldiers beheld it sweep away so great a proportion of the treasure purchased by their blood and toil. What fell to the share of the general appeared, according to the ideas of wealth in the sixteenth century, an enormous sum. Some of Cortes's favourites had secretly appropriated to their own use several ornaments of gold, which neither paid the royal fifth, nor were brought into account as part of the common stock. It was, how-

Division of
it, and the
discontent it
occasioned.

ever, so manifestly the interest of Cortes at this period to make a large remittance to the king, that it is highly probable those concealments were not of great consequence.

Reasons why gold was found in such small quantities. The total sum amassed by the Spaniards bears no proportion to the ideas which might be formed, either by reflecting on the descriptions given by historians of the ancient splendour of Mexico, or by considering the productions of its mines in modern times. But among the ancient Mexicans, gold and silver were not the standards by which the worth of other commodities was estimated; and destitute of the artificial value derived from this circumstance, were no farther in request than as they furnished materials for ornaments and trinkets. These were either consecrated to the gods in their temples, or were worn as marks of distinction by their princes and some of their most eminent chiefs. As the consumption of the precious metals was inconsiderable, the demand for them was not such as to put either the ingenuity or industry of the Mexicans on the stretch, in order to augment their store. They were altogether unacquainted with the art of working the rich mines with which their country abounded. What gold they had was gathered in the beds of rivers, native, and ripened into a pure metallic state.¹ The utmost effort of their labour in search of it was to wash the earth carried down by torrents from the mountains, and to pick out the grains of gold which subsided; and even this simple operation, according to the report of the persons whom Cortes appointed to survey the provinces where there was a prospect of finding mines, they performed very unskillfully.^m From all those causes, the whole mass of gold in possession of the Mexicans was not great. As silver is rarely found pure, and the Mexican art

¹ Cortes Relat. p. 236. F. Diaz, c. 102, 103. Gomara Cron. c. 90. ^m Diaz, c. 103.

was too rude to conduct the process for refining it in a proper manner, the quantity of this metal was still less considerable.^a Thus, though the Spaniards had exerted all the power which they possessed in Mexico, and often with indecent rapacity, in order to gratify their predominant passion, and though Montezuma had fondly exhausted his treasures, in hopes of satiating their thirst for gold, the product of both, which probably included a great part of the bullion in the empire, did not rise in value above what has been mentioned.^o

Monte-
zuma in-
flexible
with re-
spect to
religion.

But however pliant Montezuma might be in other matters, with respect to one point he was inflexible. Though Cortes often urged him, with the importunate zeal of a missionary, to renounce his false gods, and to embrace the Christian faith, he always rejected the proposition, with horror. Superstition, among the Mexicans, was formed into such a regular and complete system, that its institutions naturally took fast hold of the mind; and while the rude tribes in other parts of America were easily induced to relinquish a few notions and rites, so loose and arbitrary as hardly to merit the name of a public religion, the Mexicans adhered tenaciously to their mode of worship, which, however barbarous, was accompanied with such order and solemnity as to render it an object of the highest veneration. Cortes, finding all his attempts ineffectual to shake the constancy of Montezuma, was so much enraged at his obstinacy, that in a transport of zeal he led out his soldiers to throw down the idols in the great temple by force. But the priests taking arms in defence of their altars, and the people crowding with great ardour to support them, Cortes's prudence overruled his zeal, and induced him to desist from his rash attempt, after dislodging the idols from

^a Herrera, dec. 2^a lib. ix. c. 4.

^o See Note LX.

one of the shrines, and placing in their stead an image of the Virgin Mary.^p

Schemes of
the Mexi-
cans to de-
stroy the
Spaniards.

From that moment the Mexicans, who had permitted the imprisonment of their sovereign, and suffered the exactions of strangers without a struggle, began to meditate how they might expel or destroy the Spaniards, and thought themselves called upon to avenge their insulted deities. The priests and leading men held frequent consultations with Montezuma for this purpose. But as it might prove fatal to the captive monarch to attempt either the one or the other by violence, he was willing to try more gentle means. Having called Cortes into his presence, he observed, that now, as all the purposes of his embassy were fully accomplished, the gods had declared their will, and the people signified their desire, that he and his followers should instantly depart out of the empire. With this he required them to comply, or unavoidable destruction would fall suddenly on their heads. The tenor of this unexpected requisition, as well as the determined tone in which it was uttered, left Cortes no room to doubt that it was the result of some deep scheme concerted between Montezuma and his subjects. He quickly perceived that he might derive more advantage from a seeming compliance with the monarch's inclination, than from an ill-timed attempt to change or to oppose it: and replied, with great composure, that he had already begun to prepare for returning to his own country; but as he had destroyed the vessels in which he arrived, some time was requisite for building other ships. This appeared reasonable. A number of Mexicans were sent to Vera Cruz to cut down timber, and some Spanish carpenters were appointed to superintend the work. Cortes flattered himself that during this interval he

^p See Note LXI.

might either find means to avert the threatened danger, or receive such reinforcements, as would enable him to despise it.

Anxiety
and danger
of Cortes

Almost nine months were elapsed since Portocarrero and Montejo had sailed with his dispatches to Spain; and he daily expected their return with a confirmation of his authority from the king. Without this, his condition was insecure and precarious; and after all the great things which he had done, it might be his doom to bear the name and suffer the punishment of a traitor. Rapid and extensive as his progress had been, he could not hope to complete the reduction of a great empire with so small a body of men, which by this time diseases of various kinds had considerably thinned; nor could he apply for recruits to the Spanish settlements in the islands, until he received the royal approbation of his proceedings.

The arrival
of a new
armament,

While he remained in this cruel situation, anxious about what was past, uncertain with respect to the future, and by the late declaration of Montezuma, oppressed with a new addition of cares, a Mexican courier arrived with an account of some ships having appeared on the coast. Cortes, with fond credulity, imagining that his messengers were returned from Spain, and that the completion of all his wishes and hopes was at hand, imparted the glad tidings to his companions, who received them with transports of mutual gratulation. Their joy was not of long continuance. A courier from Sandoval, whom Cortes had appointed to succeed Escalante in command at Vera Cruz, brought certain information that the armament was fitted out by Velasquez, governor of Cuba, and instead of bringing the aid which they expected, threatened them with immediate destruction.

The motives which prompted Velasquez to this

violent measure are obvious. From the circumstances of Cortes's departure, it was impossible not to suspect his intention of throwing off all dependence upon him. His neglecting to transmit any account of his operations to Cuba, strengthened this suspicion, which was at last confirmed beyond doubt, by the indiscretion of the officers whom Cortes sent to Spain. They, from some motive which is not clearly explained by the contemporary historians, touched at the island of Cuba, contrary to the peremptory orders of their general.¹ By this means Velasquez not only learned that Cortes and his followers, after formally renouncing all connexion with him, had established an independent colony in New Spain, and were soliciting the king to confirm their proceedings by his authority; but he obtained particular information concerning the opulence of the country, the valuable presents which Cortes had received, and the inviting prospects of success that opened to his view. Every passion which can agitate an ambitious mind; shame, at having been so grossly over-reached; indignation, at being betrayed by the man whom he had selected as the object of his favour and confidence; grief, for having wasted his fortune to aggrandize an enemy; and despair of recovering so fair an opportunity of establishing his fame and extending his power, now raged in the bosom of Velasquez. All these, with united force, excited him to make an extraordinary effort in order to be avenged on the author of his wrongs, and to wrest from him his usurped authority and conquests. Nor did he want the appearance of a good title to justify such an attempt. The agent whom he sent to Spain with an account of Grijalva's voyage, had met with a most favourable reception; and from the specimens which he produced, such

Fitted out
by Velas-
quez,

¹ B. Diaz. c. 54, 55. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. v. c. 14. Gomara Cron. c. 96.

high expectations were formed concerning the opulence of New Spain, that Velasquez was authorized to prosecute the discovery of the country, and appointed governor of it during life, with more extensive power and privileges than had been granted to any adventurer from the time of Columbus.* Elated by this distinguished mark of favour, and warranted to consider Cortes not only as intruding upon his jurisdiction, but as disobedient to the royal mandate, he determined to vindicate his own rights, and the honour of his sovereign, by force of arms.† His

Under the
command
of Narvaez.

ardour in carrying on his preparations was such as might have been expected from the violence of the passions with which he was animated; and in a short time an armament was completed, consisting of eighteen ships, which had on board fourscore horsemen, eight hundred foot soldiers, of which eighty were musketeers, and a hundred and twenty crossbow men, together with a train of twelve pieces of cannon. As Velasquez's experience of the fatal consequence of committing to another what he ought to have executed himself, had not rendered him more enterprising, he vested the command of this formidable body, which, in the infancy of the Spanish power in America, merits the appellation of an army, in Pamphilo de Narvaez, with instructions to seize Cortes and his principal officers, to send them prisoners to him, and then to complete the discovery and conquest of the country in his name.

The pro-
ceedings of
Narvaez.
April.

After a prosperous voyage, Narvaez landed his men without opposition near St. Juan de Ulua. Three soldiers, whom Cortes had sent to search for mines in that district, immediately joined him. By this accident he not only received information concerning the progress and situation of Cortes,

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 11.

† See Note LXII.

but as these soldiers had made some progress in the knowledge of the Mexican language, he acquired interpreters, by whose means he was enabled to hold some intercourse with the people of the country. But, according to the low cunning of deserters, they framed their intelligence with more attention to what they thought would be agreeable, than to what they knew to be true; and represented the situation of Cortes to be so desperate, and the disaffection of his followers to be so general, as increased the natural confidence and presumption of Narvaez. His first operation, however, might have taught him not to rely on their partial accounts. Having sent to summon the governor of Vera Cruz to surrender, Guevara, a priest whom he employed in that service, made the requisition with such insolence, that Sandoval, an officer of high spirit, and zealously attached to Cortes, instead of complying with his demands, seized him and his attendants, and sent them in chains to Mexico.

Cortes received them not like enemies, but as friends, and condemning the severity of Sandoval, set them immediately at liberty. By this well-timed clemency, seconded by caresses and presents, he gained their confidence, and drew from them such particulars concerning the force and intentions of Narvaez, as gave him a view of the impending danger in its full extent. He had not to contend now with half-naked Indians, no match for him in war, and still more inferior in the arts of policy, but to take the field against an army in courage and martial discipline equal to his own, in number far superior, acting under the sanction of royal authority, and commanded by an officer of known bravery. He was informed that Narvaez, more solicitous to gratify the resentment of Velásquez, than attentive to the honour or interest of his country, had begun his intercourse with the natives, by representing him and his follow-

Cortes
deeply
alarmed.

ers as fugitives and outlaws, guilty of rebellion against their own sovereign, and of injustice in invading the Mexican empire; and had declared that his chief object in visiting the country was to punish the Spaniards who had committed these crimes, and to rescue the Mexicans from oppression. He soon perceived that the same unfavourable representations of his character and actions had been conveyed to Montezuma, and that Narvaez had found means to assure him, that as the conduct of those who kept him under restraint was highly displeasing to the king his master, he had it in charge not only to rescue an injured monarch from confinement, but to reinstate him in the possession of his ancient power and independence. Animated with this prospect of being set free from subjection to strangers, the Mexicans in several provinces began openly to revolt from Cortes, and to regard Narvaez as a deliverer no less able than willing to save them. Montezuma himself kept up a secret intercourse with the new commander, and seemed to court him as a person superior in power and dignity to those Spaniards whom he had hitherto revered as the first of men.*

His deliberations concerning his own conduct.

Such were the various aspects of danger and difficulty which presented themselves to the view of Cortes. No situation can be conceived more trying to the capacity and firmness of a general, or where the choice of the plan which ought to be adopted was more difficult. If he should wait the approach of Narvaez in Mexico, destruction seemed to be unavoidable; for while the Spaniards pressed him from without, the inhabitants, whose turbulent spirit he could hardly restrain with all his authority and attention, would eagerly lay hold on such a favourable opportunity of avenging all their wrongs. If he should abandon the capital, set the

captive monarch at liberty, and march out to meet the enemy; he must at once forego the fruits of all his toils and victories, and relinquish advantages which could not be recovered without extraordinary efforts and infinite danger. If, instead of employing force, he should have recourse to conciliating measures, and attempt an accommodation with Narvaez; the natural haughtiness of that officer, augmented by consciousness of his present superiority, forbade him to cherish any sanguine hope of success. After revolving every scheme with deep attention, Cortès fixed upon that which in execution was most hazardous, but, if successful, would prove most beneficial to himself and to his country; and with the decisive intrepidity suited to desperate situations, determined to make one bold effort for victory under every disadvantage, rather than sacrifice his own conquests and the Spanish interests in Mexico.

His negotiations with the followers of Narvaez. But though he foresaw that the contest must be terminated finally by arms, it would have been not only indecent, but criminal, to have marched against his countrymen, without attempting to adjust matters by an amicable negotiation. In this service he employed Olmedo, his chaplain, to whose character the function was well suited, and who possessed, besides, such prudence and address as qualified him to carry on the secret intrigues in which Cortes placed his chief confidence. Narvaez rejected, with scorn, every scheme of accommodation that Olmedo proposed, and was with difficulty restrained from laying violent hands on him and his attendants. He met, however, with a more favourable reception among the followers of Narvaez, to many of whom he delivered letters, either from Cortes or his officers, their ancient friends and companions. Cortes artfully accompanied these with presents of rings, chains of gold, and other trinkets of

valuc, which inspired those needy adventurers with high ideas of the wealth that he had acquired, and with envy of their good fortune who were engaged in his service. Some, from hopes of becoming sharers in those rich spoils, declared for an immediate accommodation with Cortes. Others, from public spirit, laboured to prevent a civil war, which, whatever party should prevail, must shake, and perhaps subvert the Spanish power, in a country where it was so imperfectly established. Narvaez disregarded both, and by a public proclamation denounced Cortes and his adherents rebels and enemies to their country. Cortes, it is probable, was not much surprised at the untractable arrogance of Narvaez; and, after having given such a proof of his own pacific disposition as might justify his recourse to other means, he determined to advance towards an enemy whom he had laboured in vain to appease.

Marches
against
him.
May. He left a hundred and fifty men in the capital, under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, an officer of distinguished courage, for whom the Mexicans had conceived a singular degree of respect. To the custody of this slender garrison he committed a great city, with all the wealth he had amassed, and, what was still of greater importance, the person of the imprisoned monarch. His utmost art was employed in concealing from Montezuma the real cause of his march. He laboured to persuade him, that the strangers who had lately arrived were his friends and fellow-subjects; and that, after a short interview with them, they would depart together, and return to their own country. The captive prince, unable to comprehend the designs of the Spaniard, or to reconcile what he now heard with the declarations of Narvaez, and afraid to discover any symptom of suspicion or distrust of Cortes, promised to remain quietly in the Spanish quarters, and to cultivate the same

friendship with Alvarado which he had uniformly maintained with him. Cortes, with seeming confidence in this promise, but relying principally upon the injunctions which he had given Alvarado to guard his prisoner with the most scrupulous vigilance, set out from Mexico.

His strength, even after it was reinforced by the junction of Sandoval and the garrison of Vera Cruz, did not exceed two hundred and fifty men. As he hoped for success chiefly from the rapidity of his motions, his troops were not encumbered either with baggage or artillery. But as he dreaded extremely the impression which the enemy might make with their cavalry, he had provided against this danger with the foresight and sagacity which distinguish a great commander. Having observed that the Indians in the province of Chinantla used spears of extraordinary length and force, he armed his soldiers with these, and accustomed them to that deep and compact arrangement which the use of this formidable weapon, the best perhaps that ever was invented for defence, enabled them to assume.

Continues
to nego-
tiate as he
advanced.

With this small but firm battalion, Cortes advanced towards Zempoalla, of which Narvaez had taken possession. During his march, he made repeated attempts towards some accommodation with his opponent. But Narvaez requiring that Cortes and his followers should instantly recognise his title to be governor of New Spain, in virtue of the powers which he derived from Velasquez; and Cortes refusing to submit to any authority which was not founded on a commission from the emperor himself, under whose immediate protection he and his adherents had placed their infant colony; all these attempts proved fruitless. The intercourse, however, which this occasioned between the two parties, proved of no small advantage to Cortes, as it afforded him an

opportunity of gaining some of Narvaez's officers by liberal presents, of softening others by a semblance of moderation, and of dazzling all by the appearance of wealth among his troops, most of his soldiers having converted their share of the Mexican gold into chains, bracelets, and other ornaments, which they displayed with military ostentation. Narvaez and a little junto of his creatures excepted, all the army leaned towards an accommodation with their countrymen. This discovery of their inclination irritated his violent temper almost to madness. In a transport of rage, he set a price upon the head of Cortes, and of his principal officers; and having learned that he was now advanced within a league of Zempoalla with his small body of men, he considered this as an insult which merited immediate chastisement, and marched out with all his troops to offer him battle.

Attacks

Narvaez in
the night,

But Cortes was a leader of greater abilities and experience than, on equal ground, to fight an enemy so far superior in number, and so much better appointed. Having taken his station on the opposite bank of the river de Canoas, where he knew that he could not be attacked, he beheld the approach of the enemy without concern, and disregarded this vain bravade. It was then the beginning of the wet season,^b and the rain had poured down, during a great part of the day, with the violence peculiar to the torrid zone. The followers of Narvaez, unaccustomed to the hardships of military service, murmured so much at being thus fruitlessly exposed, that, from their unsoldier-like impatience, as well as his own contempt of his adversary, their general permitted them to retire to Zempoalla. The very circumstance which induced them to quit the field, encouraged Cortes to form a scheme, by which he hoped at once to terminate the war. He observed, that his

^b Hackluyt, vol. iii. 487. De Laet Descr. Ind. Oecid. 221.

hardy veterans, though standing under the torrents which continued to fall, without a single tent or any shelter whatsoever to cover them, were so far from repining at hardships which were become familiar to them, that they were still fresh and alert for service. He foresaw that the enemy would naturally give themselves up to repose after their fatigue, and that, judging of the conduct of others by their own effeminacy, they would deem themselves perfectly secure at a season so unfit for action. He resolved, therefore, to fall upon them in the dead of night, when the surprise and terror of this unexpected attack might more than compensate the inferiority of his numbers. His soldiers, sensible that no resource remained but in some desperate effort of courage, approved of the measure with such warmth, that Cortes, in a military oration which he addressed to them before they began their march, was more solicitous to temper than to inflame their ardour. He divided them into three parties. At the head of the first he placed Sandoval; intrusting this gallant officer with the most dangerous and important service, that of seizing the enemy's artillery, which was planted before the principal tower of the temple where Narvaez had fixed his headquarters. Christoval de Olid commanded the second, with orders to assault the tower, and lay hold on the general. Cortes himself conducted the third and smallest division, which was to act as a body of reserve, and to support the other two as there should be occasion. Having passed the river de Canoas, which was much swelled with the rains, not without difficulty, the water reaching almost to their chins, they advanced in profound silence, without beat of drum, or sound of any warlike instrument; each man armed with his sword, his dagger, and his Chinantlan spear. Narvaez, remiss in proportion to his security, had posted only two sentinels to watch the

motions of an enemy whom he had such good cause to dread. One of these was seized by the advanced guard of Cortes's troops, the other made his escape, and hurrying to the town with all the precipitation of fear and zeal, gave such timely notice of the enemy's approach, that there was full leisure to have prepared for their reception. But, through the arrogance and infatuation of Narvaez, this important interval was lost. He imputed this alarm to the cowardice of the sentinel, and treated with derision the idea of being attacked by forces so unequal to his own. The shouts of Cortes's soldiers, rushing on to the assault, convinced him at last that the danger which he despised was real. The rapidity with which they advanced was such, that only one cannon could be fired, before Sandoval's party closed with the enemy, drove them from their guns, and began to force their way up the steps of the tower. Narvaez, no less brave in action than presumptuous in conduct, armed himself in haste, and by his voice and example animated his men to the combat. Olid advanced to sustain his companions; and Cortes himself rushing to the front, conducted and added new vigour to the attack. The compact order in which this small body pressed on, and the impenetrable front which they presented with their long spears, bore down all opposition before it. They had now reached the gate, and were struggling to burst it open, when a soldier having set fire to the reeds with which the tower was covered, compelled Narvaez to sally out. In the first encounter he was wounded in the eye with a spear, and, falling to the ground, was dragged down the steps, and in a moment clapped in fetters. The cry of victory resounded among the troops of Cortes. Those who had sallied out with their leader now maintained the conflict feebly, and began to surrender. Among the remainder of his soldiers, stationed in two smaller

And over-
comes him.

towers of the temple, terror and confusion prevailed. The darkness was so great, that they could not distinguish between their friends and foes. Their own artillery was pointed against them. Wherever they turned their eyes, they beheld lights gleaming through the obscurity of night, which, though proceeding only from a variety of shining insects, that abound in moist and sultry climates, their affrighted imaginations represented as numerous bands of musketeers advancing with kindled matches to the attack. After a short resistance, the soldiers compelled their officers to capitulate, and before morning all laid down their arms, and submitted quietly to their conquerors.

The effects of this victory. This complete victory proved more acceptable, as it was gained almost without bloodshed, only two soldiers being killed on the side of Cortes, and two officers, with fifteen private men, of the adverse faction. Cortes treated the vanquished not like enemies, but as countrymen and friends, and offered either to send them back directly to Cuba, or to take them into his service, as partners in his fortune, on equal terms with his own soldiers. This latter proposition, seconded by a seasonable distribution of some presents from Cortes, and liberal promises of more, opened prospects so agreeable to the romantic expectations which had invited them to engage in this service, that all, a few partisans of Narvaez excepted, closed with it, and vied with each other in professions of fidelity and attachment to a general, whose recent success had given them such a striking proof of his abilities for command. Thus, by a series of events no less fortunate than uncommon, Cortes not only escaped from perdition which seemed inevitable, but, when he had least reason to expect it, was placed at the head of a thousand Spaniards, ready to follow wherever he should lead them. Whoever reflects upon the facility with which this victory

was obtained, or considers with what sudden and unanimous transition the followers of Narvaez ranged themselves under the standard of his rival, will be apt to ascribe both events as much to the intrigues as to the arms of Cortes, and cannot but suspect that the ruin of Narvaez was occasioned no less by the treachery of his own followers, than by the valour of the enemy.^c

The Mexicans take arms against the Spaniards.

But, in one point, the prudent conduct and good fortune of Cortes were equally conspicuous. If, by the rapidity of his operations after he began his march, he had not brought matters to such a speedy issue, even this decisive victory would have come too late to have saved his companions whom he left in Mexico. A few days after the discomfiture of Narvaez, a courier arrived with an account that the Mexicans had taken arms, and having seized and destroyed the two brigantines, which Cortes had built in order to secure the command of the lake, and attacked the Spaniards in their quarters, had killed several of them, and wounded more, had reduced to ashes their magazine of provisions, and carried on hostilities with such fury, that though Alvarado and his men defended themselves with undaunted resolution, they must either be soon cut off by famine, or sink under the multitude of their enemies. This revolt was excited by motives which rendered it still more alarming. On the departure of Cortes for Zempoalla, the Mexicans flattered themselves, that the long expected opportunity of restoring their sovereign to liberty, and of vindicating their country from the odious dominion of strangers, was at length arrived; that while the forces of their oppressors were divided, and the arms of one party turned against the other, they might triumph with

^c Cortes Relat. 242. D. B. Diaz. c. 110—125. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ix. c. 18, &c. Gomara Cron. c. 97, &c.

greater facility over both. Consultations were held, and schemes formed with this intention. The Spaniards in Mexico, conscious of their own feebleness, suspected and dreaded those machinations. Alvarado, though a gallant officer, possessed neither that extent of capacity, nor dignity of manners, by which Cortes had acquired such an ascendant over the minds of the Mexicans, as never allowed them to form a just estimate of his weakness or of their own strength. Alvarado knew no mode of supporting his authority but force. Instead of employing address to disconcert the plans, or to soothe the spirits of the Mexicans, he waited the return of one of their solemn festivals, when the principal persons in the empire were dancing, according to custom, in the court of the great temple; he seized all the avenues which led to it, and, allured partly by the rich ornaments which they wore in honour of their gods, and partly by the facility of cutting off at once the authors of that conspiracy which he dreaded, he fell upon them, unarmed and unsuspecting of any danger, and massacred a great number, none escaping but such as made their way over the battlements of the temple. An action so cruel and treacherous filled not only the city, but the whole empire with indignation and rage. All called aloud for vengeance; and regardless of the safety of their monarch, whose life was at the mercy of the Spaniards, or of their own danger in assaulting an enemy who had been so long the object of their terror, they committed all those acts of violence of which Cortes received an account.

He marches back to the capital. To him the danger appeared so imminent, as to admit neither of deliberation nor delay. He set out instantly with all his forces, and returned from Zempoalla with no less rapidity than he had advanced thither. At Tlascala he was joined by two thousand chosen warriors. On entering the

Mexican territories he found that disaffection to the Spaniards was not confined to the capital. The principal inhabitants had deserted the towns through which he passed; no person of note appearing to meet him with the usual respect; no provision was made for the subsistence of his troops; and though he was permitted to advance without opposition, the solitude and silence which reigned in every place, and the horror with which the people avoided all intercourse with him, discovered a deep-rooted antipathy, that excited the most just alarm. But implacable as the enmity of the Mexicans was, they were so unacquainted with the science of war, that they knew not how to take the proper measures, either for their own safety or the destruction of the Spaniards. Uninstructed by their former error in admitting a formidable enemy into their capital, instead of breaking down the causeways and bridges, by which they might have enclosed Alvarado and his party, June 24. and have effectually stopped the career of Cortes, they again suffered him to march into the city without molestation, and to take quiet possession of his ancient station.

Improper conduct of Cortes. The transports of joy with which Alvarado and his soldiers received their companions cannot be expressed. Both parties were so much elated, the one with their seasonable deliverance, and the other with the great exploits which they had achieved, that this intoxication of success seems to have reached Cortes himself; and he behaved on this occasion neither with his usual sagacity nor attention. He not only neglected to visit Montezuma, but imbibited the insult by expressions full of contempt for that unfortunate prince and his people. The forces of which he had now the command, appeared to him so irresistible, that he might assume a higher tone, and lay aside the mask of modera-

tion, under which he had hitherto concealed his designs. Some Mexicans, who understood the Spanish language, heard the contemptuous words which Cortes uttered, and reporting them to their countrymen, kindled their rage anew. They were now convinced that the intentions of the general were equally bloody with those of Alvarado, and that his original purpose in visiting their country, had not been, as he pretended, to court the alliance of their sovereign, but to attempt the conquest of his dominions. They

The violent hostility of the Mexicans. resumed their arms with the additional fury which this discovery inspired, attacked a considerable body of Spaniards who were marching towards the great square in which the public market was held, and compelled them to retire with some loss. Imboldened by this success, and delighted to find that their oppressors were not invincible, they advanced next day with extraordinary martial pomp to assault the Spaniards in their quarters. Their number was formidable, and their undaunted courage still more so. Though the artillery pointed against their numerous battalions, crowded together in narrow streets, swept off multitudes at every discharge; though every blow of the Spanish weapons fell with mortal effect upon their naked bodies, the impetuosity of the assault did not abate. Fresh men rushed forward to occupy the places of the slain, and meeting with the same fate, were succeeded by others no less intrepid and eager for vengeance. The utmost efforts of Cortes's abilities and experience, seconded by the disciplined valour of his troops, were hardly sufficient to defend the fortifications, that surrounded the post where the Spaniards were stationed, into which the enemy were more than once on the point of forcing their way.

Distress of the Spaniards.

Cortes beheld, with wonder, the implacable ferocity of a people who seemed at first

to submit tamely to the yoke, and had continued so long passive under it. The soldiers of Narvaez, who fondly imagined that they followed Cortes to share in the spoils of a conquered empire, were astonished to find that they were involved in a dangerous war, with an enemy whose vigour was still unbroken, and loudly execrated their own weakness, in giving such easy credit to the delusive promises of their new leader.^d But surprise and complaints were of no avail. Some immediate and extraordinary effort was requisite to extricate themselves out of their present situation. As soon as the approach of evening induced the Mexicans to retire, in compliance with their national custom of ceasing from hostilities with the setting sun, Cortes began to prepare for a sally, next day, with such a considerable force, as might either drive the enemy out of the city, or compel them to listen to terms of accommodation.

Cortes at-
tacks them
without
success.

He conducted, in person, the troops destined for this important service. Every invention known in the European art of war, as well as every precaution, suggested by his long acquaintance with the Indian mode of fighting, were employed to ensure success. But he found an enemy prepared and determined to oppose him. The force of the Mexicans was greatly augmented by fresh troops, which poured in continually from the country, and their animosity was in no degree abated. They were led by their nobles, inflamed by the exhortations of their priests, and fought in defence of their temples and families, under the eye of their gods, and in presence of their wives and children. Notwithstanding their numbers, and enthusiastic contempt of danger and death, wherever the Spaniards could close with them, the superiority of their discipline and arms obliged the Mexicans to give way.

^d B. Diaz. c. 136.

But in narrow streets, and where many of the bridges of communication were broken down, the Spaniards could seldom come to a fair rencounter with the enemy, and as they advanced, were exposed to showers of arrows and stones from the tops of houses. After a day of incessant exertion, though vast numbers of the Mexicans fell, and part of the city was burnt, the Spaniards, weary with the slaughter, and harassed by multitudes which successively relieved each other, were obliged at length to retire, with the mortification of having accomplished nothing so decisive as to compensate the unusual calamity of having twelve soldiers killed, and above sixty wounded. Another sally, made with greater force, was not more effectual, and in it the general himself was wounded in the hand.

Monte-
zuma slain.

Cortes now perceived, too late, the fatal error into which he had been betrayed by his own contempt of the Mexicans, and was satisfied that he could neither maintain his present station in the centre of a hostile city, nor retire from it without the most imminent danger. One resource still remained, to try what effect the interposition of Montezuma might have to soothe or overawe his subjects. When the Mexicans approached next morning to renew the assault, that unfortunate prince, at the mercy of the Spaniards, and reduced to the sad necessity of becoming the instrument of his own disgrace, and of the slavery of his people,* advanced to the battlements in his royal robes, and with all the pomp in which he used to appear on solemn occasions. At sight of their sovereign, whom they had long been accustomed to honour, and almost to revere as a god, the weapons dropped from their hands, every tongue was silent, all bowed their heads, and many prostrated themselves on the ground. Montezuma ad-

* See Note LXIV.

dressed them with every argument that could mitigate their rage, or persuade them to cease from hostilities. When he ended his discourse, a sullen murmur of disapprobation run through the ranks; to this succeeded reproaches and threats; and the fury of the multitude rising in a moment above every restraint of decency or respect, flights of arrows and volleys of stones poured in so violently upon the ramparts, that before the Spanish soldiers, appointed to cover Montezuma with their bucklers, had time to lift them in his defence, two arrows wounded the unhappy monarch, and the blow of a stone on his temple struck him to the ground. On seeing him fall, the Mexicans were so much astonished, that with a transition not uncommon in popular tumults, they passed in a moment from one extreme to the other, remorse succeeded to insult, and they fled with horror, as if the vengeance of Heaven were pursuing the crime which they had committed. The Spaniards without molestation carried Montezuma to his apartments, and Cortes hastened thither to console him under his misfortune. But the unhappy monarch now perceived how low he was sunk, and the haughty spirit which seemed to have been so long extinct, returning; he scorned to survive this last humiliation, and to protract an ignominious life, not only as the prisoner and tool of his enemies, but as the object of contempt or detestation among his subjects. In a transport of rage he tore the bandages from his wounds, and refused, with such obstinacy, to take any nourishment, that he soon ended his wretched days, rejecting with disdain all the solicitations of the Spaniards to embrace the Christian faith.

New con-
ficta,

Upon the death of Montezuma, Cortes having lost all hope of bringing the Mexicans to an accommodation, saw no prospect of safety but in

attempting a retreat, and began to prepare for it. But a sudden motion of the Mexicans engaged him in new conflicts. They took possession of a high tower in the great temple which overlooked the Spanish quarters, and placing there a garrison of their principal warriors, not a Spaniard could stir without being exposed to their missile weapons. From this post it was necessary to dislodge them at any risk; and Juan de Escobar, with a numerous detachment of chosen soldiers, was ordered to make the attack. But Escobar, though a gallant officer, and at the head of troops accustomed to conquer, and who now fought under the eyes of their countrymen, was thrice repulsed. Cortes, sensible that not only the reputation, but the safety of his army depended on the success of this assault, ordered a buckler to be tied to his arm, as he could not manage it with his wounded hand, and rushed with his drawn sword into the thickest of the combatants. Encouraged by the presence of their general, the Spaniards returned to the charge with such vigour, that they gradually forced their way up the steps, and drove the Mexicans to the platform at the top of the tower. There a dreadful carnage began, when two young Mexicans of high rank, observing Cortes as he animated his soldiers by his voice and example, resolved to sacrifice their own lives in order to cut off the author of all the calamities which desolated their country. They approached him in a suppliant posture, as if they had intended to lay down their arms, and seizing him in a moment, hurried him towards the battlements, over which they threw themselves headlong, in hopes of dragging him along to be dashed in pieces by the same fall. But Cortes, by his strength and agility, broke loose from their grasp, and the gallant youths perished in this generous though unsuccessful attempt to save their

country.^f As soon as the Spaniards became masters of the tower, they set fire to it, and, without farther molestation, continued the preparations for their retreat.

The Spaniards abandon the city. This became the more necessary, as the Mexicans were so much astonished at the last effort of the Spanish valour, that they began to change their whole system of hostility, and, instead of incessant attacks, endeavoured, by barricading the streets, and breaking down the causeways, to cut off the communication of the Spaniards with the continent, and thus to starve an enemy whom they could not subdue. The first point to be determined by Cortes and his followers, was, whether they should march out openly in the face of day, when they could discern every danger, and see how to regulate their own motions, as well as how to resist the assaults of the enemy; or, whether they should endeavour to retire secretly in the night? The latter was preferred, partly from hopes that their national superstition would restrain the Mexicans from venturing to attack them in the night, and partly from their own fond belief in the predictions of a private soldier, who, having acquired universal credit by a smattering of learning, and his pretensions to astrology, boldly assured his countrymen of success, if they made their retreat in this manner. They began to move, towards midnight, in three divisions. Sandoval led the van; Pedro Alvarado, and Velasquez de Leon, had the conduct of the rear; and Cortes commanded in the centre, where he placed the prisoners, among whom were a son and two daughters of Montezuma, together with several Mexicans of

^f M. Clavigero has censured me with asperity for relating this gallant action of the two Mexicans, and for supposing that there were battlements round the temple of Mexico. I related the attempt to destroy Cortes on the authority of *Her. dec. 2. lib. x. c. 9.* and of *Torquemado, lib. 4. c. 69.* I followed them likewise in supposing the uppermost platform of the temple to be encompassed by a battlement or rail.

distinction, the artillery, the baggage, and a portable bridge of timber, intended to be laid over the breaches in the causeway. They marched in profound silence along the causeway which led to Tacuba, because it was shorter than any of the rest, and, lying most remote from the road towards Tlascala and the sea-coast, had been left more entire by the Mexicans. They reached the first breach in it without molestation, hoping that their retreat was undiscovered.

Attacked
by the
Mexicans.

But the Mexicans, unperceived, had not only watched all their motions with attention, but had made proper dispositions for a most formidable attack. While the Spaniards were intent upon placing their bridge in the breach, and occupied in conducting their horses and artillery along it, they were suddenly alarmed with a tremendous sound of warlike instruments, and a general shout from an innumerable multitude of enemies; the lake was covered with canoes; flights of arrows, and showers of stones poured in upon them from every quarter; the Mexicans rushing forward to the charge with fearless impetuosity, as if they hoped in that moment to be avenged for all their wrongs. Unfortunately the wooden bridge, by the weight of the artillery, was wedged so fast into the stones and mud, that it was impossible to remove it. Dismayed at this accident, the Spaniards advanced with precipitation towards the second breach. The Mexicans hemmed them in on every side, and though they defended themselves with their usual courage, yet crowded together as they were on a narrow causeway, their discipline and military skill were of little avail, nor did the obscurity of the night permit them to derive great advantage from their fire-arms, or the superiority of their other weapons. All Mexico was now in arms, and so eager were the people on the destruction of their oppressors, that they who were

not near enough to annoy them in person, impatient of the delay, pressed forward with such ardour, as drove on their countrymen in the front with irresistible violence. Fresh warriors instantly filled the place of such as fell. The Spaniards, weary with slaughter, and unable to sustain the weight of the torrent that poured in upon them, began to give way. In a moment the confusion was universal; horse and foot, officers and soldiers, friends and enemies, were mingled together; and while all fought, and many fell, they could hardly distinguish from what hand the blow came.

Their disasters, Cortes, with about a hundred foot soldiers, and a few horse, forced his way over the two remaining breaches in the causeway, the bodies of the dead serving to fill up the chasms, and reached the main land. Having formed them as soon as they arrived, he returned with such as were yet capable of service, to assist his friends in their retreat, and to encourage them, by his presence and example, to persevere in the efforts requisite to effect it. He met with part of his soldiers, who had broke through the enemy, but found many more overwhelmed by the multitude of their aggressors, or perishing in the lake; and heard the piteous lamentations of others, whom the Mexicans, having taken alive, were carrying off in triumph to be sacrificed to the god of war. Before day, all who had escaped assembled at Tacuba. But when the morning dawned, and discovered to the view of Cortes, his shattered battalion, reduced to less than half its number, the survivors dejected, and most of them covered with wounds, the thoughts of what they had suffered, and the remembrance of so many faithful friends and gallant followers who had fallen in that night of sorrow,* pierced his soul with such anguish, that while he was forming their ranks, and issuing some necessary orders, his soldiers ob-

* *Noche Triste* is the name by which it is still distinguished in New Spain.

served the tears trickling from his eyes, and remarked, with much satisfaction, that while attentive to the duties of a general, he was not insensible to the feelings of a man.

And loss. In this fatal retreat many officers of distinction perished,^b and among these Velasquez de

Leon, who having forsaken the party of his kinsman, the governor of Cuba, to follow the fortune of his companions, was, on that account, as well as for his superior merit, respected by them as the second person in the army. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage, were lost; the greater part of the horses, and above two thousand Tlascalans, were killed, and only a very small portion of the treasure which they had amassed was saved. This, which had been always their chief object, proved a great cause of their calamity; for many of the soldiers having so overloaded themselves with bars of gold as rendered them unfit for action, and retarded their flight, fell, ignominiously, the victims of their own inconsiderate avarice. Amidst so many disasters, it was some consolation to find that Aguilar and Marina, whose function as interpreters was of such essential importance, had made their escape.ⁱ

Difficult retreat of the Spaniards. The first care of Cortes was to find some shelter for his wearied troops; for as the Mexicans infested them on every side, and the people of Tacuba began to take arms, he could not continue in his present station. He directed his march towards the rising ground, and having fortunately discovered a temple situated on an eminence, took possession of it. There he found not only the shelter for which he wished, but, what was no less wanted, some provisions to refresh his men; and though the enemy did not intermit their attacks throughout the day, they

^b See Note LXV.

ⁱ Cortes Relat. p. 248. B. Diaz. c. 128. Gomara. Cron. c. 109, Herrera, dec. 2. lib. 1. c. 11, 12.

were with less difficulty prevented from making any impression. During this time Cortes was engaged in deep consultation with his officers, concerning the route which they ought to take in their retreat. They were now on the west side of the lake. Tlascala, the only place where they could hope for a friendly reception, lay about sixty-four miles to the east of Mexico;^k so that they were obliged to go round the north end of the lake before they could fall into the road which led thither. A Tlascalan soldier undertook to be their guide, and conducted them through a country, in some places marshy, in others mountainous, in all ill-cultivated and thinly peopled. They marched for six days with little respite, and under continual alarms, numerous bodies of the Mexicans hovering around them, sometimes harassing them at a distance with their missile weapons, and sometimes attacking them closely in front, in rear, in flank, with great boldness, as they now knew that they were not invincible. Nor were the fatigue and danger of those incessant conflicts the worst evils to which they were exposed. As the barren country through which they passed afforded hardly any provisions, they were reduced to feed on berries, roots, and the stalks of green maize; and at the very time that famine was depressing their spirits and wasting their strength, their situation required the most vigorous and unremitting exertions of courage and activity. Amidst those complicated distresses, one circumstance supported and animated the Spaniards. Their commander sustained this sad reverse of fortune with unshaken magnanimity. His presence of mind never forsook him; his sagacity foresaw every event, and his vigilance provided for it. He was foremost in every danger, and endured every hardship with cheerfulness. The difficulties with which he was sur-

^k Villa Segnor Theatro Americanos, lib. ii. c. 11.

rounded seemed to call forth new talents ; and his soldiers, though despairing themselves, continued to follow him with increasing confidence in his abilities.

Battle of
Otumba.

On the sixth day they arrived near to Otumba, not far from the road between Mexico and Tlascala. Early next morning they began to advance towards it, flying parties of the enemy still hanging on their rear ; and, amidst the insults with which they accompanied their hostilities, Marina remarked that they often exclaimed with exultation, " Go on, robbers ; go to the place where you shall quickly meet the vengeance due to your crimes."

The meaning of this threat the Spaniards did not comprehend, until they reached the summit of an eminence before them. There a spacious valley opened to their view, covered with a vast army, extending as far as the eye could reach. The Mexicans, while with one body of their troops they harassed the Spaniards in their retreat, had assembled their principal force on the other side of the lake ; and marching along the road which led directly to Tlascala, posted it in the plain of Otumba, through which they knew Cortes must pass. At the sight of this incredible multitude, which they could survey at once from the rising ground, the Spaniards were astonished, and even the boldest began to despair. But Cortes, without allowing leisure for their fears to acquire strength by reflection, after warning them briefly that no alternative now remained but to conquer or to die, led them instantly to the charge. The Mexicans waited their approach with unusual fortitude. Such, however, was the superiority of the Spanish discipline and arms, that the impression of this small body was irresistible ; and which ever way its force was directed, it penetrated and dispersed the most numerous battalions. But while these gave way in one quarter, new combatants advanced from another, and the Spa-

niards, though successful in every attack, were ready to sink under those repeated efforts, without seeing any end of their toil, or any hope of victory. At that time Cortes observed the great standard of the empire, which was carried before the Mexican general, advancing; and fortunately recollecting to have heard, that on the fate of it depended the event of every battle, he assembled a few of his bravest officers, whose horses were still capable of service, and placing himself at their head, pushed forward towards the standard with an impetuosity which bore down every thing before it. A chosen body of nobles, who guarded the standard, made some resistance, but were soon broken. Cortes, with a stroke of his lance, wounded the Mexican general, and threw him to the ground. One of the Spanish officers alighting, put an end to his life, and laid hold of the imperial standard. The moment that their leader fell, and the standard, towards which all directed their eyes, disappeared, a universal panic struck the Mexicans, and, as if the bond which held them together had been dissolved, every ensign was lowered, each soldier threw away his weapons, and all fled with precipitation to the mountains. The Spaniards, unable to pursue them far, returned to collect the spoils of the field, which were so valuable, as to be some compensation for the wealth which they had lost in Mexico; for in the enemy's army were most of their principal warriors, dressed out in their richest ornaments, as if they had been marching to assured victory. Next day, to their great joy, they entered the Tlascalán territories.¹

Reception
of the Spaniards in
Tlascala.

But amidst their satisfaction in having got beyond the precincts of a hostile country, they could not look forward without solici-

¹ Cortes Relat. p. 219. B. Diaz. c. 128. Gomara Cron. c. 110. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 12, 13.

tude, as they were still uncertain what reception they might meet with from allies, to whom they returned in a condition very different from that in which they had lately set out from their dominions. Happily for them, the enmity of the Tlascalans to the Mexican name was so inveterate, their desire to avenge the death of their countrymen so vehement, and the ascendant which Cortes had acquired over the chiefs of the republic so complete, that far from entertaining a thought of taking any advantage of the distressed situation in which they beheld the Spaniards, they received them with a tenderness and cordiality which quickly dissipated all their suspicions.

Some interval of tranquillity and indulgence was now absolutely necessary; not only that the Spaniards might give attention to the cure of their wounds, which had been too long neglected, but in order to recruit their strength, exhausted by such a long succession of fatigue and hardships. During this, Cortes learned that he and his companions were not the only Spaniards who had felt the effects of the Mexican enmity. A considerable detachment which was marching from Zempoalla towards the capital, had been cut off by the people of Tepeaca. A smaller party, returning from Tlascala to Vera Cruz, with the share of the Mexican gold allotted to the garrison, had been surprised and destroyed in the mountains. At a juncture when the life of every Spaniard was of importance, such losses were deeply felt. The schemes which Cortes was meditating rendered them peculiarly afflictive to him. While his enemies, and even many of his own followers, considered the disasters which had befallen him as fatal to the progress of his arms, and imagined that nothing now remained but speedily to abandon a country which he had invaded with unequal force,

New deli-
berations
of Cortes.

his mind, as eminent for perseverance as for enterprise, was still bent on accomplishing his original purpose, of subjecting the Mexican empire to the crown of Castile. Severe and unexpected as the check was which he had received, it did not appear to him a sufficient reason for relinquishing the conquests which he had already made, or against resuming his operations with better hopes of success. The colony at Vera Cruz was not only safe, but had remained unmolested. The people of Zempoalla and the adjacent districts had discovered no symptoms of defection. The Tlascalans continued faithful to their alliance. On their martial spirit, easily roused to arms, and inflamed with implacable hatred of the Mexicans, Cortes depended for powerful aid. He had still the command of a body of Spaniards, equal in number to that with which he had opened his way into the centre of the empire, and had taken possession of the capital; so that with the benefit of greater experience, as well as more perfect knowledge of the country, he did not despair of quickly recovering all that he had been deprived of by untoward events.

The measures he takes. Full of this idea, he courted the Tlascalan chiefs with such attention, and distributed among them so liberally the rich spoils of Otumba, that he was secure of obtaining whatever he should require of the republic. He drew a small supply of ammunition, and two or three field-pieces, from his stores at Vera Cruz. He dispatched an officer of confidence with four ships of Narvaez's fleet to Hispaniola and Jamaica, to engage adventurers, and to purchase horses, gunpowder, and other military stores. As he knew that it would be vain to attempt the reduction of Mexico, unless he could secure the command of the lake, he gave orders to prepare, in the mountains of Tlascala, materials for building twelve brigantines, so as they might be carried thither in

pieces ready to be put together, and launched when he stood in need of their service.^m

Mutinous
spirit of his
troops.

But while, with provident attention, he was taking those necessary steps towards the execution of his measures, an obstacle arose in a quarter where it was least expected, but most formidable. The spirit of discontent and mutiny broke out in his own army. Many of Narvaez's followers were planters rather than soldiers, and had accompanied him to New Spain with sanguine hopes of obtaining settlements, but with little inclination to engage in the hardships and dangers of war. As the same motives had induced them to enter into their new engagements with Cortes, they no sooner became acquainted with the nature of the service, than they bitterly repented of their choice. Such of them as had the good fortune to survive the perilous adventures in which their own imprudence had involved them, happy in having made their escape, trembled at the thoughts of being exposed a second time to similar calamities. As soon as they discovered the intention of Cortes, they began secretly to murmur and cabal, and waxing gradually more audacious, they, in a body, offered a remonstrance to their general against the imprudence of attacking a powerful empire with his shattered forces, and formally required him to lead them back directly to Cuba. Though Cortes, long practised in the arts of command, employed arguments, entreaties, and presents to convince or to soothe them; though his own soldiers, animated with the spirit of their leader, warmly seconded his endeavours; he found their fears too violent and deep-rooted to be removed, and the utmost he could effect was to prevail with them to defer their departure for some time, on a promise that he

would, at a more proper juncture, dismiss such as should desire it.

Means he employs to revive their confidence. That the malecontents might have no leisure to brood over the causes of their disaffection, he resolved instantly to call forth his troops into action. He proposed to chastise the people of Tepeaca for the outrage which they had committed, and as the detachment which they had cut off happened to be composed mostly of soldiers who had served under Narvaez, their companions, from the desire of vengeance, engaged the more willingly

August.

in this war. He took the command in person accompanied by a numerous body of Tlascalans, and in the space of a few weeks, after various encounters, with great slaughter of the Tepeacans, reduced that province to subjection. During several months, while he waited for the supplies of men and ammunition which he expected, and was carrying on his preparations for constructing the brigantines, he kept his troops constantly employed in various expeditions against the adjacent provinces, all of which were conducted with a uniform tenor of success. By these, his men became again accustomed to victory, and resumed their wonted sense of superiority; the Mexican power was weakened; the Tlascalan warriors acquired the habit of acting in conjunction with the Spaniards; and the chiefs of the republic delighted to see their country enriched with the spoils of all the people around them, and astonished every day with fresh discoveries of the irresistible prowess of their allies, they declined no effort requisite to support them.

Strengthened by several reinforcements.

All those preparatory arrangements, however, though the most prudent and efficacious which the situation of Cortes allowed him to make, would have been of little avail, without a reinforcement of Spanish soldiers. Of this he was so deeply sensible, that it was the chief object of his

thoughts and wishes ; and yet his only prospect of obtaining it from the return of the officer whom he had sent to the isles to solicit aid, was both distant and uncertain. But what neither his own sagacity nor power could have procured, he owed to a series of fortunate and unforeseen incidents. The governor of Cuba, to whom the success of Narvaez appeared an event of infallible certainty, having sent two small ships after him with new instructions, and a supply of men and military stores, the officer whom Cortes had appointed to command on the coast, artfully decoyed them into the harbour of Vera Cruz, seized the vessels, and easily persuaded the soldiers to follow the standard of a more able leader than him whom they were destined to join." Soon after, three ships of more considerable force came into the harbour separately. These belonged to an armament fitted out by Francisco de Garay, governor of Jamaica, who, being possessed with the rage of discovery and conquest which animated every Spaniard settled in America, had long aimed at intruding into some district of New Spain, and dividing with Cortes the glory and gain of annexing that empire to the crown of Castile. They unadvisedly made their attempt on the northern provinces, where the country was poor, and the people fierce and warlike ; and after a cruel succession of disasters, famine compelled them to venture into Vera Cruz, and cast themselves upon the mercy of their countrymen. Their fidelity

Oct. 28. was not proof against the splendid hopes and promises which had seduced other adventurers, and, as if the spirit of revolt had been contagious in New Spain, they likewise abandoned the master whom they were bound to serve, and enlisted under Cortes.* Nor was it America alone that furnished such unex-

* B. Diaz. c. 131.

* Cortes Relat. 253. F. B. Diaz. c. 133.

pected aid; a ship arrived from Spain, freighted by some private merchants with military stores, in hopes of a profitable market in a country, the fame of whose opulence began to spread over Europe. Cortes eagerly purchased a cargo which to him was invaluable, and the crew, following the general example, joined him at Tlascala.^p

From those various quarters, the army of Cortes was augmented with a hundred and eighty men, and twenty horses, a reinforcement too inconsiderable to produce any consequence which would entitle it to have been mentioned in the history of other parts of the globe. But in that of America, where great revolutions were brought about by causes which seemed to bear no proportion to their effects, such small events rise into importance, because they were sufficient to decide with respect to the fate of kingdoms. Nor is it the least remarkable instance of the singular felicity conspicuous in many passages of Cortes's story, that the two persons chiefly instrumental in furnishing him with those seasonable supplies, should be an avowed enemy who aimed at his destruction, and an envious rival who wished to supplant him.

Number of
his forces.

The first effect of the junction with his new followers was to enable him to dismiss such of Narvaez's soldiers as remained with reluctance in his service. After their departure, he still mustered five hundred and fifty infantry, of which fourscore were armed with muskets or cross-bows, forty horsemen, and a train of nine field-pieces.^q At the head of these, accompanied by ten thousand Tlascalans and other friendly Indians, Cortes began his march towards Mexico, on the 28th of December, six months after his disastrous retreat from that city.

^p Cortes Relat. c. 136.

^q Ibid. 255. E.

^r Ibid. 256. A. B. Diaz. c. 127.

Prepara-
tions of
the Mexi-
cans for
their de-
fence.

Nor did he advance to attack an enemy unprepared to receive him. Upon the death of Montezuma, the Mexican chiefs, in whom the right of electing the emperor was vested, had instantly raised his brother Quetlavaca to the throne. His avowed and inveterate enmity to the Spaniards would have been sufficient to gain their suffrages, although he had been less distinguished for courage and capacity. He had an immediate opportunity of shewing that he was worthy of their choice, by conducting, in person, those fierce attacks which compelled the Spaniards to abandon his capital; and as soon as their retreat afforded him any respite from action, he took measures for preventing their return to Mexico, with prudence equal to the spirit which he had displayed in driving them out of it. As from the vicinity of Tlascala, he could not be unacquainted with the motions and intentions of Cortes, he observed the storm that was gathering, and began early to provide against it. He repaired what the Spaniards had ruined in the city, and strengthened it with such new fortifications as the skill of his subjects was capable of erecting. Besides filling his magazines with the usual weapons of war, he gave directions to make long spears headed with the swords and daggers taken from the Spaniards, in order to annoy the cavalry. He summoned the people in every province of the empire to take arms against their oppressors, and as an encouragement to exert themselves with vigour, he promised them exemption from all the taxes which his predecessors had imposed.* But what he laboured with the greatest earnestness was, to deprive the Spaniards of the advantages which they derived from the friendship of the Tlascalans, by endeavouring to persuade that people to renounce all connexion with men, who were not only avowed ene-

* Cortes Relat. p. 253. E. 254. A. B. Díaz. c. 140.

mies of the gods, whom they worshipped, but who would not fail to subject them at last to the same yoke, which they were now inconsiderately lending their aid to impose upon others. These representations, no less striking than well founded, were urged so forcibly by his ambassadors, that it required all the address of Cortes to prevent their making a dangerous impression.'

But while Quetlavaca was arranging his plan of defence, with a degree of foresight uncommon in an American, his days were cut short by the small-pox. This distemper, which raged at that time in New Spain with fatal malignity, was unknown in that quarter of the globe, until it was introduced by the Europeans, and may be reckoned among the greatest calamities brought upon them by their invaders. In his stead the Mexicans raised to the throne Guatimozin, nephew and son-in-law of Montezuma, a young man of such high reputation for abilities and valour, that in this dangerous crisis, his countrymen, with one voice, called him to the supreme command."

1521.
Cortes ad-
vances to-
wards
Mexico.

As soon as Cortes entered the enemy's territories, he discovered various preparations to obstruct his progress. But his troops forced their way with little difficulty, and took possession of Tezeuco, the second city of the empire, situated on the banks of the lake about twenty miles from Mexico." Here he determined to establish his head-quarters, as the most proper station for launching his brigantines, as well as for making his approaches to the capital. In order to render his residence there more secure, he deposed the cazique or chief, who was at the head of that community, under pretext of some defect in his title, and substituted in his place a person whom a faction of the nobles

¹ B. Diaz. c. 129. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 14. 19.

² B. Diaz. c. 130.

³ Villa Senor Teatro Americano, i. 136.

pointed out as the right heir of that dignity. Attached to him by this benefit, the new cazique and his adherents served the Spaniards with inviolable fidelity.*

His operations slow and cautious.

As the preparations for constructing the brigantines advanced slowly under the unskilful hands of soldiers and Indians, whom Cortes was obliged to employ in assisting three or four carpenters who happened fortunately to be in his service, and as he had not yet received the reinforcement which he expected from Hispaniola, he was not in a condition to turn his arms directly against the capital. To have attacked, at this period, a city so populous, so well prepared for defence, and in a situation of such peculiar strength, must have exposed his troops to inevitable destruction. Three months elapsed before the materials for the brigantines were finished, and before he heard any thing with respect to the success of the officer whom he had sent to Hispaniola. This, however, was not a season of inaction to Cortes. He attacked successively several of the towns situated around the lake; and though all the Mexican power was exerted to obstruct his operations, he either compelled them to submit to the Spanish crown, or reduced them to ruins. The inhabitants of other towns he endeavoured to conciliate by more gentle means, and though he could not hold any intercourse with them but by the intervention of interpreters, yet, under all the disadvantage of that tedious and imperfect mode of communication he had acquired such thorough knowledge of the state of the country, as well as of the dispositions of the people, that he conducted his negotiations and intrigues with astonishing dexterity and success. Most of the cities adjacent to Mexico were originally the capitals of

* Cortes Relat. 256, &c. B. Diaz. c. 137. Gomara Cron. c. 121. Herrera, dec. 3. c. 1.

small independent states; and some of them having been but lately annexed to the Mexican empire, still retained the remembrance of their ancient liberty, and bore with impatience the rigorous yoke of their new masters. Cortes having early observed symptoms of their disaffection, availed himself of this knowledge to gain their confidence and friendship. By offering with confidence, to deliver them from the odious dominion of the Mexicans, and by liberal promises of more indulgent treatment, if they would unite with him against their oppressors, he prevailed on the people of several considerable districts, not only to acknowledge the king of Castile as their sovereign, but to supply the Spanish camp with provisions, and to strengthen his army with auxiliary troops. Guatimozin, on the first appearance of defection among his subjects, exerted himself with vigour to prevent or to punish their revolt; but in spite of his efforts, the spirit continued to spread. The Spaniards gradually acquired new allies, and with deep concern he beheld Cortes arming against his empire those very hands which ought to have been active in its defence; and ready to advance against the capital at the head of a numerous body of his own subjects.^y

While, by those various methods, Cortes was gradually circumscribing the Mexican power in such a manner that his prospect of overturning it seemed neither to be uncertain nor remote, all his schemes were well nigh defeated by a conspiracy no less unexpected than dangerous. The soldiers of Narvaez had never united perfectly with the original companions of Cortes, nor did they enter into his measures with the same cordial zeal. Upon every occasion that required any extraordinary effort of courage or

^y Cortes Relat. 256—260. B. Diaz. c. 137—140. Gomara Cron. c. 122. 123. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. 1. c. 1, 2.

of patience, their spirits were apt to sink; and now, on a near view of what they had to encounter, in attempting to reduce a city so inaccessible as Mexico, and defended by a numerous army, the resolution even of those among them who had adhered to Cortes when he was deserted by their associates, began to fail. Their fears led them to presumptuous and unsoldier-like discussions concerning the propriety of their general's measures, and the improbability of their success. From these they proceeded to censure and invectives, and at last began to deliberate how they might provide for their own safety, of which they deemed their commander to be totally negligent. Antonia Villefagna, a private soldier, but bold, intriguing, and strongly attached to Velasquez, artfully fomented this growing spirit of disaffection. His quarters became the rendezvous of the malecontents, where, after many consultations, they could discover no method of checking Cortes in his career, but by assassinating him and his most considerable officers, and conferring the command upon some person who would relinquish his wild plans, and adopt measures more consistent with the general security. Despair inspired them with courage. The hour for perpetrating the crime, the persons whom they destined as victims, the officers to succeed them in command, were all named; and the conspirators signed an association, by which they bound themselves with most solemn oaths to mutual fidelity. But on the evening before the appointed day, one of Cortes's ancient followers, who had been seduced into the conspiracy, touched with compunction at the imminent danger of a man whom he had long been accustomed to revere, or struck with horror at his own treachery, went privately to his general, and revealed to him all that he knew. Cortes, though deeply alarmed, discerned at once what conduct was proper

in a situation so critical. He repaired instantly to Villefagna's quarters, accompanied by some of his most trusty officers. The astonishment and confusion of the man at this unexpected visit anticipated the confession of his guilt. Cortes, while his attendants seized the traitor, snatched from his bosom a paper containing the association, signed by the conspirators. Impatient to know how far the defection extended, he retired to read it, and found there names which filled him with surprise and sorrow. But aware how dangerous a strict scrutiny might prove at such a juncture, he confined his judicial inquiries to Villefagna alone. As the proofs of his guilt were manifest, he was condemned after a short trial, and next morning he was seen hanging before the door of the house in which he had lodged. Cortes called his troops together, and having explained to them the atrocious purpose of the conspirators, as well as the justice of the punishment inflicted on Villefagna, he added, with an appearance of satisfaction, that he was entirely ignorant with respect to all the circumstances of this dark transaction, as the traitor, when arrested, had suddenly torn and swallowed a paper which probably contained an account of it, and under the severest tortures possessed such constancy as to conceal the names of his accomplices. This artful declaration restored tranquillity to many a breast that was throbbing, while he spoke, with consciousness of guilt and dread of detection; and by this prudent moderation, Cortes had the advantage of having discovered, and of being able to observe such of his followers as were disaffected; while they, flattering themselves that their past crime was unknown, endeavoured to avert any suspicion of it, by redoubling their activity and zeal in his service.*

* Cortes Relat. 285. C. B. Diaz. c. 146. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 1

His singular
prepara-
tions for
building
brigant-
ines.

Cortes did not allow them leisure to ruminate on what had happened; and as the most effectual means of preventing the return of a mutinous spirit, he determined to call forth his troops immediately to action. Fortunately, a proper occasion for this occurred without his seeming to court it. He received intelligence that the materials for building the brigantines were at length completely finished, and waited only for a body of Spaniards to conduct them to Tezeuco. The command of this convoy, consisting of two hundred foot soldiers, fifteen horsemen, and two field-pieces, he gave to Sandoval, who, by the vigilance, activity, and courage which he manifested on every occasion, was growing daily in his confidence, and in the estimation of his fellow-soldiers. The service was no less singular than important; the beams, the planks, the masts, the cordage, the sails, the iron-work, and all the infinite variety of articles requisite for the construction of thirteen brigantines, were to be carried sixty miles over land, through a mountainous country, by people who were unacquainted with the ministry of domestic animals, or the aid of machines to facilitate any work of labour. The Tlascalans furnished eight thousand *Tamenes*, an inferior order of men destined for servile tasks, to carry the materials on their shoulders, and appointed fifteen thousand warriors to accompany and defend them. Sandoval made the disposition for their progress with great propriety, placing the *Tamenes* in the centre, one body of warriors in the front, another in the rear, with considerable parties to cover the flanks. To each of these he joined some Spaniards, not only to assist them in danger, but to accustom them to regularity and subordination. A body so numerous, and so much encumbered, advanced leisurely, but in excellent order; and in some places, where it was con-

fined by the woods or mountains, the line of march extended above six miles. Parties of Mexicans frequently appeared hovering around them on the high grounds; but perceiving no prospect of success in attacking an enemy continually on his guard, and prepared to receive them, they did not venture to molest him; and Sandoval had the glory of conducting safely to Tezeuco, a convoy on which all the future operations of his countrymen depended.^a

Receives a new reinforcement. This was followed by another event of no less moment. Four ships arrived at Vera

Cruz from Hispaniola, with two hundred soldiers, eighty horses, two battering cannon, and a considerable supply of ammunition and arms.^b Elevated with observing that all his preparatory schemes, either for recruiting his own army, or impairing the force of the enemy, had now produced their full effect, Cortes, impatient to begin the siege in form, hastened the launching of the brigantines. To facilitate this he had employed a vast number of Indians, for two months, in deepening the small rivulet which runs by Tezeuco into the lake, and in forming it into a canal near two miles in length;^c and though the Mexicans, aware of his intentions, as well as of the danger which threatened them, endeavoured frequently to interrupt the labourers, or to burn the brigantines, the work was at last completed.^d On

The brigantines launched. the 28th of April, all the Spanish troops, together with the auxiliary Indians, were drawn up on the banks of the canal; and with extraordinary military pomp, rendered more solemn by the celebration of the most sacred rites of religion, the brigantines were launched. As they fell down the canal in order, father Olmedo blessed them, and gave each its name. Every eye followed them with

^a Cortes Relat. 260. C. E. ^b Diaz. c. 140. ^c Cortes Relat. 259. F. 263. D. Gomara Cron. c. 129. ^d See Note LXVI. ^e B. Diaz. c. 140.

wonder and hope, until they entered the lake, when they hoisted their sails, and bore away before the wind. A general shout of joy was raised; all admiring that bold inventive genius, which, by means so extraordinary that their success almost exceeded belief, had acquired the command of a fleet, without the aid of which Mexico would have continued to set the Spanish power and arms at defiance.*

Disposi-
tions for
the siege. Cortes determined to attack the city from three different quarters; from Tepeaca on the north side of the lake, from Tacuba on the west, and from Cuyocan towards the south. Those towns were situated on the principal causeways which led to the capital, and intended for their defence. He appointed Sandoval to command in the first, Pedro de Alvarado in the second, and Christoval de Olid in the third; allotting to each a numerous body of Indian auxiliaries, together with an equal division of Spaniards, who, by the junction of the troops from Hispaniola, amounted now to eighty-six horsemen, and eight hundred and eighteen foot soldiers; of whom one hundred and eighteen were armed with muskets or cross-bows. The train of artillery consisted of three battering cannon, and fifteen field-pieces.^f He reserved for himself, as the station of greatest importance and danger, the conduct of the brigantines, each armed with one of his small cannon, and manned with twenty-five Spaniards.

May 10. As Alvarado and Olid proceeded towards the posts assigned them, they broke down the aqueducts which the ingenuity of the Mexicans had erected for conveying water into the capital, and by the distress to which this reduced the inhabitants, gave a beginning to the calamities which they were destined to suffer.^g Alvarado and Olid found the

* Cortes Relat. 266. C. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 5. Gomara Cron. c. 1:9.

^f Cortes Relat. 266. C.

^g Ibid. 267. B. B. Diaz. c. 150. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 13.

towns of which they were ordered to take possession deserted by their inhabitants, who had fled for safety to the capital, where Guatimozin had collected the chief force of his empire, as there alone he could hope to make a successful stand against the formidable enemies who were approaching to assault him.

Mexicans
attack the
brigan-
tines. The first effort of the Mexicans was to destroy the fleet of brigantines, the fatal effects of whose operations they foresaw and dreaded.

Though the brigantines, after all the labour and merit of Cortes in forming them, were of inconsiderable bulk, rudely constructed, and manned chiefly with landsmen, hardly possessed of skill enough to conduct them, they must have been objects of terror to a people unacquainted with any navigation but that of their lake, and possessed of no vessel larger than a canoe. Necessity, however, urged Guatimozin to hazard the attack; and hoping to supply by numbers what he wanted in force, he assembled such a multitude of canoes as covered the face of the lake. They rowed on boldly to the charge, while the brigantines, retarded by a dead calm, could scarcely advance to meet them. But as the enemy drew

Repulsed. near, a breeze suddenly sprung up; in a moment the sails were spread, the brigantines, with the utmost ease, broke through their feeble opponents, upset many canoes, and dissipated the whole armament with such slaughter, as convinced the Mexicans, that the progress of the Europeans in knowledge and arts rendered their superiority greater on this new element, than they had hitherto found it by land.^b

Singular
plan of
conduct-
ing the
siege. From that time Cortes remained master of the lake, and the brigantines not only preserved a communication between the Spaniards in their different stations, though at

^b Cortes Relat. 267, C. B. Diaz. c. 150. Gomara Cron. c. 131. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. 1. c. 17.

considerable distance from each other, but were employed to cover the causeways on each side, and keep off the canoes, when they attempted to annoy the troops as they advanced towards the city. Cortes formed the brigantines in three divisions, appointing one to cover each of the stations from which an attack was to be carried on against the city, with orders to second the operations of the officer who commanded there. From all the three stations he pushed on the attack against the city with equal vigour; but in a manner so very different from the conduct of sieges in regular war, that he himself seems afraid it would appear no less improper than singular, to persons unacquainted with his situation.¹ Each morning his troops assaulted the barricades which the enemy had erected on the causeways, forced their way over the trenches which they had dug, and through the canals where the bridges were broken down, and endeavoured to penetrate into the heart of the city, in hopes of obtaining some decisive advantage, which might force the enemy to surrender, and terminate the war at once; but when the obstinate valour of the Mexicans rendered the efforts of the day ineffectual, the Spaniards retired in the evening to their former quarters. Thus their toil and danger were, in some measure, continually renewed; the Mexicans repairing in the night what the Spaniards had destroyed through the day, and recovering the posts from which they had driven them. But necessity prescribed this slow and untoward mode of operation. The number of his troops was so small, that Cortes durst not, with a handful of men, attempt to make a lodgment in a city where he might be surrounded and annoyed by such a multitude of enemies. The remembrance of what he had already suffered by the ill-judged confidence with which he had ventured into such a dan-

¹ Cortes Relat. 270. F.

gerous situation, was still fresh in his mind. The Spaniards, exhausted with fatigue, were unable to guard the various posts which they daily gained; and though their camp was filled with Indian auxiliaries, they durst not devolve this charge upon them, because they were so little accustomed to discipline, that no confidence could be placed in their vigilance. Besides this, Cortes was extremely solicitous to preserve the city as much as possible from being destroyed, both because he destined it to be the capital of his conquests, and wished that it might remain as a monument of his glory. From all these considerations, he adhered obstinately, for a month after the siege was opened, to the system which he had adopted. The Mexicans, in their own defence, displayed valour which was hardly inferior to that with which the Spaniards attacked them. On land, on water, by night and by day, one furious conflict succeeded to another. Several Spaniards were killed, more wounded, and all were ready to sink under the toils of unintermitting service, which were rendered more intolerable by the injuries of the season, the periodical rains being now set in with their usual violence.*

Endea-
vours to
take the
city by
storm.

Astonished and disconcerted with the length and difficulties of the siege, Cortes determined to make one great effort to get possession of the city, before he relinquished the plan which he had hitherto followed, and had recourse to any other mode of attack. With this view, he sent instructions to Alvarado and Sandoval to advance with their divisions to a general assault, and took the command in person of that posted on the causeway of Cuyocan. Animated by his presence, and the expectation of some decisive event, the Spaniards pushed forward with irresistible impetuosity. They broke through one barricade after another,

July 5.

forced their way over the ditches and canals, and having entered the city, gained ground incessantly, in spite of the multitude and ferocity of their opponents. Cortes, though delighted with the rapidity of his progress, did not forget that he might still find it necessary to retreat ; and in order to secure it, appointed Julien de Alderete, a captain of chief note in the troops which he had received from Hispaniola, to fill up the canals and gaps in the causeway as the main body advanced. That officer, deeming it inglorious to be thus employed, while his companions were in the heat of action and the career of victory, neglected the important charge committed to him, and hurried on, inconsiderately, to mingle with the combatants. The Mexicans, whose military attention and skill were daily improving, no sooner observed this, than they carried an account of it to their monarch.

Repulsed Guatimozin instantly discerned the consequence of the error which the Spaniards had committed, and, with admirable presence of mind, prepared to take advantage of it. He commanded the troops posted in the front to slacken their efforts, in order to allure the Spaniards to push forward, while he dispatched a large body of chosen warriors through different streets, some by land, and others by water, towards the great breach in the causeway, which had been left open. On a signal which he gave, the priests in the principal temple struck the great drum consecrated to the god of war. No sooner did the Mexicans hear its doleful solemn sound, calculated to inspire them with contempt of death, and enthusiastic ardour, than they rushed upon the enemy with frantic rage. The Spaniards, unable to resist men urged on no less by religious fury than hope of success, began to retire, at first leisurely, and with a good countenance ; but

as the enemy pressed on, and their own impatience to escape increased, the terror and confusion became so general, that when they arrived at the gap in the causeway, Spaniards and Tlascalans, horsemen and infantry, plunged in promiscuously, while the Mexicans rushed upon them fiercely from every side, their light canoes carrying them through shoals which the brigantines could not approach. In vain did Cortes attempt to stop and rally his flying troops; fear rendered them regardless of his entreaties or commands. Finding all his endeavours to renew the combat fruitless, his next care was to save some of those who had thrown themselves into the water; but while thus employed, with more attention to their situation than to his own, six Mexican captains suddenly laid hold of him, and were hurrying him off in triumph; and though two of his officers rescued him at the expense of their own lives, he received several dangerous wounds before he could break loose. Above sixty

With considerable loss.

Spaniards perished in the rout; and what rendered the disaster more afflicting, forty of these fell alive into the hands of an enemy never known to shew mercy to a captive.¹

Those who were taken sacrificed to the god of war. The approach of night, though it delivered the dejected Spaniards from the attacks of the enemy, ushered in, what was hardly less grievous, the noise of their barbarous triumph, and

of the horrid festival with which they celebrated their victory. Every quarter of the city was illuminated; the great temple shone with such peculiar splendour, that the Spaniards could plainly see the people in motion, and the priests busy in hastening the preparations for the death of the prisoners. Through the gloom, they fancied that they discerned their

¹ Cortes Relat. p. 273. B. Diaz. c. 152. Gomara Cron. c. 138. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 23.

companions by the whiteness of their skins, as they were stript naked, and compelled to dance before the image of the god to whom they were to be offered. They heard the shrieks of those who were sacrificed, and thought that they could distinguish each unhappy victim, by the well-known sound of his voice. Imagination added to what they really saw or heard, and augmented its horror. The most unfeeling melted into tears of compassion, and the stoutest heart trembled at the dreadful spectacle which they beheld.^m

New
schemes
and efforts
of the
Mexicans.

Cortes, who, besides all that he felt in common with his soldiers, was oppressed with the additional load of anxious reflections natural to a general on such an unexpected calamity, could not, like them, relieve his mind by giving vent to its anguish. He was obliged to assume an air of tranquillity, in order to revive the spirit and hopes of his followers. The juncture, indeed, required an extraordinary exertion of fortitude. The Mexicans, elated with their victory, sailed out next morning to attack him in his quarters. But they did not rely on the efforts of their own arms alone. They sent the heads of the Spaniards whom they had sacrificed, to the leading men in the adjacent provinces, and assured them that the god of war, appeased by the blood of their invaders, which had been shed so plentifully on his altars, had declared with an audible voice, that in eight days time those hated enemies should be finally destroyed, and peace and prosperity re-established in the empire.

Cortes de-
serted by
many of
his Indian
allies.

A prediction uttered with such confidence, and in terms so void of ambiguity, gained universal credit among a people prone to superstition. The zeal of the provinces,

^m See Note LXVII.

which had already declared against the Spaniards, augmented; and several which had hitherto remained inactive, took arms, with enthusiastic ardour, to execute the decree of the gods. The Indian auxiliaries who had joined Cortes, accustomed to venerate the same deities with the Mexicans, and to receive the responses of their priests with the same implicit faith, abandoned the Spaniards as a race of men devoted to certain destruction. Even the fidelity of the Tlascalans was shaken, and the Spanish troops were left almost alone in their stations. Cortes, finding that he attempted in vain to dispel the superstitious fears of his confederates by argument, took advantage, from the imprudence of those who had framed the prophecy, in fixing its accomplishment so near at hand, to give a striking demonstration of its falsity. He suspended all military operations during the period marked out by the oracle. Under cover of the brigantines, which kept the enemy at a distance, his troops lay in safety, and the fatal term expired without any disaster."

He regains
their
friendship,

Many of his allies, ashamed of their own credulity, returned to their station. Other tribes, judging that the gods who had now deceived the Mexicans, had decreed finally to withdraw their protection from them, joined his standard; and such was the levity of a simple people, moved by every slight impression, that in a short time after such a general defection of his confederates, Cortes saw himself, if we may believe his own account, at the head of a hundred and fifty thousand Indians. Even with such a numerous army, he found it necessary to adopt a new and more wary system of operation. Instead of renewing his attempts to become master

And adopts
a new sys-
tem of at-
tack.

of the city at once, by such bold but dangerous efforts of valour as he had already tried, he made his advances gradually, and with every possible precaution against exposing his men to any calamity similar to that which they still bewailed. As the Spaniards pushed forward, the Indians regularly repaired the causeways behind them. As soon as they got possession of any part of the town, the houses were instantly levelled with the ground. Day by day, the Mexicans, forced to retire as their enemies gained ground, were hemmed in within more narrow limits. Guatimozin, though unable to stop the career of the enemy, continued to defend his capital with obstinate resolution, and disputed every inch of ground. The Spaniards not only varied their mode of attack, but, by orders of Cortes, changed the weapons with which they fought. They were again armed with the long Chinantlan spears, which they had employed with such success against Narvaez; and, by the firm array in which this enabled them to range themselves, they repelled, with little danger, the loose assault of the Mexicans; incredible numbers of them fell in the conflicts which they renewed every day.* While war wasted without, famine began to consume them within, the city. The Spanish brigantines, having the entire command of the lake, rendered it almost impossible to convey to the besieged any supply of provisions by water. The immense number of his Indian auxiliaries enabled Cortes to shut up the avenues to the city by land. The stores which Guatimozin had laid up were exhausted by the multitudes which had crowded into the capital to defend their sovereign and the temples of their gods. Not only the people, but, persons of the highest rank, felt the utmost distresses of famine. What

* Cortes Relat. p. 275. C. 276. F. B. Diaz. c. 153.

they suffered, brought on infectious and mortal distempers, the last calamity that visits besieged cities, and which filled up the measure of their woes.

Courage and constancy of Guatimozin. But, under the pressure of so many and such various evils, the spirit of Guatimozin remained firm and unsubdued. He rejected,

with scorn, every overture of peace from Cortes; and, disdaining the idea of submitting to the oppressors of his country, determined not to survive its ruin. The Spaniards continued their

July 27. progress. At length all the three divisions penetrated into the great square in the centre of the city, and made a secure lodgment there. Three-fourths of the city were now reduced, and laid in ruins. The remaining quarter was so closely pressed, that it could not long withstand assailants, who attacked it from their new station with superior advantage, and more assured expectation of success. The Mexican nobles, solicitous to save the life of a monarch whom they revered, prevailed on Guatimozin to retire from a place where resistance was now vain, that he might rouse the more distant provinces of the empire to arms, and maintain there a more successful struggle with the public enemy. In order to facilitate the execution of this measure, they endeavoured to amuse Cortes with overtures of submission, that, while his attention was employed in adjusting the articles of pacification, Guatimozin might escape unperceived. But they made this attempt upon a leader of greater sagacity and discernment than to be deceived by their arts. Cortes, suspecting their intention, and aware of what moment it was to defeat it, appointed Sandoval, the officer on whose vigilance he could most perfectly rely, to take the command of the brigantines, with strict injunctions to watch every

motion of the enemy. Sandoval, attentive to the charge, observing some large canoes crowded with people rowing across the lake with extraordinary rapidity, instantly gave the signal to chase. Garcia Holguin, who commanded the swiftest-sailing brigantine, soon overtook them, and was preparing to fire on the foremost canoe, which seemed to carry some person whom all the rest followed and obeyed. At once the rowers dropped their oars, and all on board, throwing down their arms, conjured him with cries and tears to forbear, as the emperor was there. Holguin eagerly seized his prize; and Guatimozin, with a dignified composure, gave himself up into his hands, requesting only that no insult might be offered to the empress or his children. When conducted to Cortes, he appeared neither with the sullen fierceness of a barbarian, nor with the dejection of a suppliant. "I have done," said he, addressing himself to the Spanish general, "what became a monarch. I have defended my people to the last extremity. Nothing now remains but to die. Take this dagger," laying his hand on one which Cortes wore, "plant it in my breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of use."^q

Aug. 13. As soon as the fate of their sovereign was known, the resistance of the Mexicans ceased; and Cortes took possession of that small part of the capital which yet remained undestroyed. Thus terminated the siege of Mexico, the most memorable event in the conquest of America. It continued seventy-five days, hardly one of which passed without some extraordinary effort of one party in the attack, or of the other in the defence of a city, on the fate of which both knew that the fortune of the em-

^q Cortes Relat. 279. B. Dias, c. 156. Gomara Cron. c. 143. Herrera dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 7.

pire depended. As the struggle here was most obstinate, it was likewise more equal, than any between the inhabitants of the Old and New worlds. The great abilities of Guatimozin, the number of his troops, the peculiar situation of his capital, so far counterbalanced the superiority of the Spaniards in arms and discipline, that they must have relinquished the enterprise, if they had trusted for success to themselves alone. But Mexico was overturned by the jealousy of neighbours who dreaded its power, and by the revolt of subjects impatient to shake off its yoke. By their effectual aid, Cortes was enabled to accomplish what, without such support, he would hardly have ventured to attempt. How much soever this account of the reduction of Mexico may detract, on the one hand, from the marvellous relations of some Spanish writers, by ascribing that to simple and obvious causes which they attribute to the romantic valour of their countrymen, it adds, on the other, to the merit and abilities of Cortes, who, under every disadvantage, acquired such an ascendant over unknown nations, as to render them instruments towards carrying his schemes into execution.*

Smallness
of the
booty, and
disap-
pointment
of the
Spaniards.

The exultation of the Spaniards, on accomplishing this arduous enterprise, was at first excessive. But this was quickly damped by the cruel disappointment of those sanguine hopes, which had animated them amidst so many hardships and dangers. Instead of the inexhaustible wealth which they expected from becoming masters of Montezuma's treasures, and the ornaments of so many temples, their rapaciousness could only collect an inconsiderable booty amidst ruins and desolation.* Guatimozin, aware of his impending fate,

* See Note LXVIII.

* The gold and silver, according to Cortes, amounted only to 120,000 pesos. (Relat. 283. A.) a sum much inferior to that which the Spaniards had formerly divided in Mexico.

had ordered what remained of the riches amassed by his ancestors, to be thrown into the lake. The Indian auxiliaries, while the Spaniards were engaged in conflict with the enemy, had carried off the most valuable part of the spoil. The sum to be divided among the conquerors was so small, that many of them disdained to accept of the pittance which fell to their share, and all murmured and exclaimed; some against Cortes and his confidants, whom they suspected of having secretly appropriated to their own use a large portion of the riches which should have been brought into the common stock; others, against Guatimozin, whom they accused of obstinacy, in refusing to discover the place where he had hidden his treasure.

Guati-
mozin tor-
tured.

Arguments, entreaties, and promises were employed in order to soothe them, but with so little effect, that Cortes, from solicitude to check this growing spirit of discontent, gave way to a deed which stains the glory of all his great actions. Without regarding the former dignity of Guatimozin, or feeling any reverence for those virtues which he had displayed, he subjected the unhappy monarch, together with his chief favourite, to torture, in order to force from them a discovery of the royal treasures, which it was supposed they had concealed. Guatimozin bore whatever the refined cruelty of his tormentors could inflict, with the invincible fortitude of an American warrior. His fellow-sufferer, overcome by the violence of the anguish, turned a dejected eye towards his master, which seemed to implore his permission to reveal all that he knew. But the high-spirited prince, darting on him a look of authority mingled with scorn, checked his weakness by asking, "Am I now reposing on a bed of flowers?" Overawed by the reproach, the favourite persevered in his dutiful silence, and expired. Cortes, ashamed of

a scene so horrid, rescued the royal victim from the hands of his torturers, and prolonged a life reserved for new indignities and sufferings.*

All the provinces of the empire submit. The fate of the capital, as both parties had foreseen, decided that of the empire. The provinces submitted one after another to the conquerors. Small detachments of Spaniards marching through them without interruption, penetrated in different quarters to the great Southern ocean, which, according to the ideas of Columbus, they imagined would open a short as well as easy passage to the East Indies, and secure to the crown of Castile all the envied wealth of those fertile regions;† and the active mind of Cortes began already to form schemes for attempting this important discovery.‡

Cortes forms schemes of new discoveries, which are completed by Magellan. He did not know, that during the progress of his victorious arms in Mexico, the very scheme of which he began to form some idea, had been undertaken and accomplished. As this is one of the most splendid events in the history of the Spanish discoveries, and has been productive of effects peculiarly interesting to those extensive provinces which Cortes had now subjected to the crown of Castile, the account of its rise and progress merits a particular detail.

Ferdinand Magalhaens, or Magellan, a Portuguese gentleman of honourable birth, having served several years in the East Indies, with distinguished valour, under the famous Albuquerque, demanded the recompense which he thought due to his services, with the boldness natural to a high-spirited soldier. But as his general would not grant his suit, and he expected greater justice from his sovereign, whom he

* B. Diaz, c. 157. Gomara Cron. c. 146. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 8. Torquem. Mon. Ind. i. 574.

† Cortes Relat. 280. D. &c. B. Diaz, c. 157. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 17. Gomara Cron. c. 149.

knew to be a good judge and a generous rewarder of merit, he quitted India abruptly, and returned to Lisbon. In order to induce Emanuel to listen more favourably to his claim, he not only stated his past services, but offered to add to them by conducting his countrymen to the Molucca or Spice Islands, by holding a westerly course; which he contended would be both shorter and less hazardous than that which the Portuguese now followed by the Cape of Good Hope, through the immense extent of the Eastern ocean. This was the original and favourite project of Columbus, and Magellan founded his hopes of success on the ideas of that great navigator, confirmed by many observations, the result of his own naval experience, as well as that of his countrymen, in their intercourse with the East. But though the Portuguese monarchs had the merit of having first awakened and encouraged the spirit of discovery in that age, it was their destiny, in the course of a few years, to reject two grand schemes for this purpose, the execution of which would have been attended with a great accession of glory to themselves, and of power to their kingdom. In consequence of some ill-founded prejudice against Magellan, or of some dark intrigue which contemporary historians have not explained, Emanuel would neither bestow the recompense which he claimed, nor approve of the scheme which he proposed; and dismissed him with a disdainful coldness intolerable to a man conscious of what he deserved, and animated with the sanguine hopes of success peculiar to those who are capable of forming or of conducting new and great undertakings. In a transport of resentment, Magellan formally renounced his allegiance to an ungrateful master, and fled to the court of Castile, where he expected that his talents would be more justly estimated. He endeavoured to recommend

himself by offering to execute, under the patronage of Spain, that scheme, which he had laid before the court of Portugal, the accomplishment of which, he knew, would wound the monarch against whom he was exasperated in the most tender part. In order to establish the justness of his theory, he produced the same arguments which he had employed at Lisbon; acknowledging, at the same time, that the undertaking was both arduous and expensive, as it could not be attempted but with a squadron of considerable force, and victualled for at least two years. Fortunately, he applied to a minister who was not apt to be deterred, either by the boldness of a design, or the expense of carrying it into execution. Cardinal Ximenes, who at that time directed the affairs of Spain, discerning at once what an increase of wealth and glory would accrue to his country by the success of Magellan's proposal, listened to it with a most favourable ear. Charles V., on his arrival in his Spanish dominions, entered into the measure with no less ardour, and orders were issued for equipping a proper squadron at the public charge, of which the command was given to Magellan, whom the king honoured with the habit of St. Jago and the title of Captain-general.*

His voy-
age.

On the 10th of August, 1519, Magellan sailed from Seville with five ships, which, according to the ideas of the age, were deemed to be of considerable force, though the burden of the largest did not exceed one hundred and twenty tons. The crews of the whole amounted to two hundred and thirty-four men, among whom were some of the most skilful pilots in Spain, and several Portuguese sailors, in whose experience, as more extensive,

* *Merrett*, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 19. lib. iv. c. 2. *Gomara Hist. c. 91.* *Dalrymple's Collect. of Voyages to the South Pacific Ocean*, vol. i. p. 1, &c.

Magellan placed still greater confidence. After touching at the Canaries, he stood directly south towards the equinoctial line along the coast of America, but was so long retarded by tedious calms, and spent so much time in searching every bay and inlet for that communication with the Southern ocean, which he wished to discover, that he did not reach the river De la Plata till the 12th of January.

1520.

That spacious opening through which its vast body of water pours into the Atlantic, allured him to enter; but after sailing up it for some days, he concluded, from the shallowness of the stream, and the freshness of the water, that the wished-for strait was not situated there, and continued his course towards the south. On the 31st of March he arrived in the port of St. Julian, about forty-eight degrees south of the line, where he resolved to winter. In this uncomfortable station he lost one of his squadron, and the Spaniards suffered so much from the excessive rigour of the climate, that the crews of three of his ships, headed by their officers, rose in open mutiny, and insisted on relinquishing the visionary project of a desperate adventurer, and returning directly to Spain. This dangerous insurrection Magellan suppressed, by an effort of courage no less prompt than intrepid, and inflicted exemplary punishment on the ringleaders. With the remainder of his followers, overawed but not reconciled to his scheme, he continued his voyage towards the south, and at length discovered, near the fifty-third degree of latitude, the mouth of a strait, into which he entered, notwithstanding the murmurs and remonstrances of the people under his command. After sailing twenty days in that winding, dangerous channel, to which he gave his own name, and where one of his ships deserted him, the great Southern

ocean opened to his view, and with tears of joy he returned thanks to Heaven for having thus far crowned his endeavours with success.*

But he was still at a greater distance than he imagined from the object of his wishes. He sailed during three months and twenty days in a uniform direction towards the north-west, without discovering land. In this voyage, the longest that had ever been made in the unbounded ocean, he suffered incredible distress. His stock of provisions was almost exhausted, the water became putrid, the men were reduced to the shortest allowance with which it was possible to sustain life, and the scurvy, the most dreadful of all the maladies with which seafaring people are afflicted, began to spread among the crew. One circumstance alone afforded them some consolation; they enjoyed an uninterrupted course of fair weather, with such favourable winds, that Magellan bestowed on that ocean the name of *Pacific*, which it still retains. When reduced to such extremity that they must have sunk under

March 6. their sufferings, they fell in with a cluster of

small but fertile islands, which afforded them refreshments in such abundance, that their health was soon re-established. From these isles, which he called *De los Ladrones*, he proceeded on his voyage, and soon made a more important discovery of the islands now known by the name of the *Philippines*. In one of these he got into an unfortunate quarrel with the natives, who attacked him with a numerous body of troops well armed; and while he fought at the head of his men with his usual valour, he

April 26. fell by the hands of those barbarians, together with several of his principal officers.

The expedition was prosecuted under other com-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 10. lib. ix. c. 10, &c. Gomara Hist. c. 92. Pigafetta Viaggio ap. Ramus. il. p. 352, &c.

manders. After visiting many of the smaller isles

scattered in the eastern part of the Indian
Nov. 8.

ocean, they touched at the great island of Borneo, and at length landed in Tidore, one of the Moluccas, to the astonishment of the Portuguese, who could not comprehend how the Spaniards, by holding a westerly course, had arrived at that sequestered seat of their most valuable commerce, which they themselves had discovered by sailing in an opposite direction. There, and in the adjacent isles, the Spaniards found a people acquainted with the benefits of extensive trade, and willing to open an intercourse with a new nation. They took in a cargo of the precious spices, which are the distinguished production of these islands; and with that, as well as with specimens of the rich commodities yielded by the other countries which they had visited, the *Victory*, which, of the two ships that remained of the squadron, was most fit for a long

1522. voyage, set sail for Europe, under the com-
Jan. mand of Juan Sebastian del Cano. He followed the course of the Portuguese, by the Cape of Good Hope, and after many disasters and sufferings, he arrived at St. Lucar on the 7th of September, 1522, having sailed round the globe in the space of three years and twenty-eight days.*

Though an untimely fate deprived Magellan of the satisfaction of accomplishing this great undertaking, his contemporaries, just to his memory and talents, ascribed to him not only the honour of having formed the plan, but of having surmounted almost every obstacle to the completion of it; and in the present age his name is still ranked among the highest in the roll of eminent and successful navigators. The naval glory of Spain now eclipsed that

* *Magellan*, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 3. 9. lib. iv. c. 1. Gomara Cron. c. 93, &c. *Pigafetta* ap. Ramus. ii. p. 361, &c.

of every other nation ; and by a singular felicity she had the merit, in the course of a few years, of discovering a new continent almost as large as that part of the earth which was formerly known, and of ascertaining by experience the form and extent of the whole of the terraqueous globe.

The Spaniards were not satisfied with the glory of having first encompassed the earth ; they expected to derive great commercial advantages from this new and boldest effort of their maritime skill. The men of science among them contended, that the spice islands, and several of the richest countries in the East, were so situated as to belong of right to the crown of Castile, in consequence of the partition made by Alexander VI. The merchants, without attending to this discussion, engaged eagerly in that lucrative and alluring commerce, which was now open to them. The Portuguese, alarmed at the intrusion of such formidable rivals, remonstrated and negotiated in Europe, while in Asia they obstructed the trade of the Spaniards by force of arms. Charles V., not sufficiently instructed with respect to the importance of this valuable branch of commerce, or distracted by the multiplicity of his schemes and operations, did not afford his subjects proper protection. At last, the low state of his finances, exhausted by the efforts of his arms in every part of Europe, together with the dread of adding a new war with Portugal to those in which he was already engaged, induced him to make over his claim of the Moluccas to the Portuguese for three hundred and fifty thousand ducats. He reserved, however, to the crown of Castile the right of reviving its pretensions on repayment of that sum ; but other objects engrossed his attention and that of his successors ; and Spain was finally ex-

cluded from a branch of commerce in which it was engaging with sanguine expectations of profit.*

Though the trade with the Moluccas was relinquished, the voyage of Magellan was followed by commercial effects of great moment to Spain. Philip II., in the year 1564, reduced those islands which he discovered in the Eastern ocean to subjection, and established settlements there; between which and the kingdom of New Spain, a regular intercourse, the nature of which shall be explained in its proper place, is still carried on. I return now to the transactions in New Spain.

An order to supersede Cortes, At the time that Cortes was acquiring such extensive territories for his native country, and preparing the way for future conquests, it was his singular fate not only to be destitute of any commission or authority from the sovereign whom he was serving with such successful zeal, but to be regarded as an undutiful and seditious subject. By the influence of Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, his conduct in assuming the government of New Spain was declared to be an irregular usurpation, in contempt of the royal authority; and Christoval de Tapia received a commission, empowering him to supersede Cortes, to seize his person, to confiscate his effects, to make a strict scrutiny into his proceedings, and to transmit the result of all the inquiries carried on in New Spain to the council of the Indies, of which the bishop of Burgos was president. A few weeks after the reduction of Mexico, Tapia landed at Vera Cruz with the royal mandate to strip its conqueror of his power, and treat him as a criminal. But Fonseca had chosen a very improper instrument to wreak his vengeance on Cortes. Tapia had neither the reputation nor the talents that

* Herrera, dec. 3. lib. vi. c. 5, &c. dec. 4. lib. v. c. 7, &c.

suited the high command to which he was appointed.

Which he eludes. Cortes, while he publicly expressed the most

respectful veneration for the emperor's authority, secretly took measures to defeat the effect of his commission; and having involved Tapia and his followers in a multiplicity of negotiations and conferences, in which he sometimes had recourse to threats, but more frequently employed bribes and promises, he at length prevailed upon that weak man to abandon a province which he was unworthy of governing.^b

Applies again to the court, May 15. But notwithstanding the fortunate dexterity with which he had eluded this danger, Cortes was so sensible of the precarious tenure by which he held his power, that he dispatched deputies to Spain, with a pompous account of the success of his arms, with farther specimens of the productions of the country, and with rich presents to the emperor, as the earnest of future contributions from his new conquests; requesting, in recompense for all his services, the approbation of his proceedings, and that he might be intrusted with the government of those dominions, which his conduct, and the valour of his followers, had added to the crown of Castile. The juncture in which his deputies reached the court was favourable. The internal commotions in Spain, which had disquieted the beginning of Charles's reign, were just appeased.^c The ministers had leisure to turn their attention towards foreign affairs. The account of Cortes's victories filled his countrymen with admiration. The extent and value of his conquests became the object of vast and interesting hopes. Whatever stain he might have contracted, by the irregularity of the steps which he took in order to attain power, was so fully

^b Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iii. c. 16, dec. iv. c. 1. Cortes Relat. 281. E. B. Diaz. c. 158.

^c Hist. of Charles V. vol. ii. b. iii.

effaced by the splendour and merit of the great actions which this had enabled him to perform, that every heart revolted at the thought of inflicting any censure on a man whose services entitled him to the highest marks of distinction. The public voice declared warmly in favour of his pretensions ; and Charles, arriving in Spain about this time, adopted the sentiments of his subjects with a youthful ardour. Notwithstanding the claims of Velasquez, and the partial representations of the bishop of Burgos, the emperor appointed Cortes captain-general and governor of New Spain, judging that no person was so capable of maintaining the royal authority, or of establishing good order both among his Spanish and Indian subjects, as the victorious leader whom the former had long been accustomed to obey, and the latter had been taught to fear and to respect.^d

His schemes and arrangements. Even before his jurisdiction received this legal sanction, Cortes ventured to exercise all the powers of a governor, and, by various arrangements, endeavoured to render his conquests a secure and beneficial acquisition to his country. He determined to establish the seat of government in its ancient station, and to raise Mexico again from its ruins ; and having conceived high ideas concerning the future grandeur of the state of which he was laying the foundation, he began to rebuild its capital on a plan which hath gradually formed the most magnificent city in the New World. At the same time, he employed skilful persons to search for mines in different parts of the country, and opened some which were found to be richer than any which the Spaniards had hitherto discovered in America. He detached his principal officers into the remote provinces, and encouraged them to set-

^d Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 3. Gomara Cron. c. 164, 165. B. Diaz, 167. 168.

tle there, not only by bestowing upon them large tracts of land, but by granting them the same dominion over the Indians, and the same right to their service, which the Spaniards had assumed in the islands.

Insurrec-
tions of
the Mexi-
cans, and
cruelty of
the Spa-
niards.

It was not, however, without difficulty, that the Mexican empire could be entirely reduced into the form of a Spanish colony. Enraged and rendered desperate by oppression, the natives often forgot the superiority of their enemies, and ran to arms in defence of their liberties. In every contest, however, the European valour and discipline prevailed. But fatally for the honour of their country, the Spaniards sullied the glory redounding from these repeated victories by their mode of treating the vanquished people. After taking Guatimozin, and becoming masters of his capital, they supposed that the king of Castile entered on possession of all the rights of the captive monarch, and affected to consider every effort of the Mexicans to assert their own independence, as the rebellion of vassals against their sovereign, or the mutiny of slaves against their master. Under the sanction of those ill-founded maxims, they violated every right that should be held sacred between hostile nations. After each insurrection, they reduced the common people, in the provinces which they subdued, to the most humiliating of all conditions, that of personal servitude. Their chiefs, supposed to be more criminal, were punished with greater severity, and put to death in the most ignominious or the most excruciating mode, that the insolence or the cruelty of their conquerors could devise. In almost every district of the Mexican empire, the progress of the Spanish arms is marked with blood, and with deeds so atrocious, as disgrace the enter-

prising valour that conducted them to success. In the country of Panuco, sixty caziques or leaders, and four hundred nobles, were burnt at one time. Nor was this shocking barbarity perpetrated in any sudden sally of rage, or by a commander of inferior note. It was the act of Sandoval, an officer whose name is entitled to the second rank in the annals of New Spain, and executed after a solemn consultation with Cortes; and to complete the horror of the scene, the children and relations of the wretched victims were assembled, and compelled to be spectators of their dying agonies.* It seems hardly possible to exceed in horror this dreadful example of severity; but it was followed by another, which affected the Mexicans still more sensibly, as it gave them a most feeling proof of their own degradation, and of the small regard which their haughty masters retained for the ancient dignity and splendour of their state. On a slight suspicion, confirmed by very imperfect evidence, that Guatimozin had formed a scheme to shake off the yoke, and to excite his former subjects to take arms, Cortes, without the formality of a trial, ordered the unhappy monarch, together with the caziques of Tezeuco and Tacuba, the two persons of greatest eminence in the empire, to be hanged; and the Mexicans, with astonishment and horror, beheld this disgraceful punishment inflicted upon persons, to whom they were accustomed to look up with reverence, hardly inferior to that which they paid to the gods themselves.† The example of Cortes and his principal officers encouraged and justified persons of subordinate rank to venture upon committing greater excesses. Nuno de Guzman, in particular, stained an illustrious

* Cortes Relat. 291. C. Gomara Cron. c. 155.

† Gomara Cron. c. 170. B. Diaz. c. 177. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 9. See Note LKIX.

name by deeds of peculiar enormity and rigour, in various expeditions which he conducted.^a

First ob-
ject of in-
dustry
among the
conquer-
ors.

One circumstance, however, saved the Mexicans from farther consumption, perhaps from one as complete as that which had depopulated the islands. The first conquerors did not attempt to search for the precious metals in the bowels of the earth. They were neither sufficiently wealthy to carry on the expensive works, which are requisite for opening those deep recesses, where nature has concealed the veins of gold and silver, nor sufficiently skilful to perform the ingenious operations by which those precious metals are separated from their respective ores. They were satisfied with the more simple method, practised by the Indians, of washing the earth carried down rivers and torrents from the mountains, and collecting the grains of native metal deposited there. The rich mines of New Spain, which have poured forth their treasures with such profusion on every quarter of the globe, were not discovered for several years after the

1552, &c.

conquest.^b By that time, a more orderly government and police were introduced into the colony; experience, derived from former errors, had suggested many useful and humane regulations for the protection and preservation of the Indians; and though it then became necessary to increase the number of those employed in the mines, and they were engaged in a species of labour more pernicious to the human constitution, they suffered less hardship or diminution than from the ill-judged, but less extensive, schemes of the first conquerors.

Their po-
verty.

While it was the lot of the Indians to suffer, their new masters seemed not to have derived any considerable wealth from their ill-conducted researches. According to the usual fate of

^a Herrera, dec. 4 & 5. passim.

^b Herrera, dec. 8. lib. x. c. 21.

first settlers in new colonies, it was their lot to encounter danger, and to struggle with difficulties; the fruits of their victories and toils were reserved for times of tranquillity, and reaped by successors of greater industry, but of inferior merit. The early historians of America abound with accounts of the sufferings and of the poverty of its conquerors.ⁱ In New Spain, their condition was rendered more grievous by a peculiar arrangement. When Charles V. advanced Cortes to the government of that country, he at the same time appointed certain commissioners to receive and administer the royal revenue there, with independent jurisdiction.^k These men, chosen from inferior stations in various departments of public business at Madrid, were so much elevated with their promotion, that they thought they were called to act a part of the first consequence. But being accustomed to the minute formalities of office, and having contracted the narrow ideas suited to the sphere in which they had hitherto moved, they

1524. were astonished on arriving in Mexico, at the high authority which Cortes exercised, and could not conceive that the mode of administration, in a country recently subdued and settled, must be different from what took place in one where tranquillity and regular government had been long established. In their letters, they represented Cortes as an ambitious tyrant, who, having usurped a jurisdiction superior to law, aspired at independence, and by his exorbitant wealth and extensive influence might accomplish those disloyal schemes which he apparently meditated.^l These insinuations made such deep impression upon the Spanish ministers, most of whom had been formed to business under the jealous and rigid administration of Ferdinand, that,

ⁱ Cortes Relat. 285. F. B. Diaz. c. 209.

^k Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 3.

^l Herrera, dec. 3. lib. vi. c. 14.

unmindful of all Cortes's past services, and regardless of what he was then suffering in conducting that extraordinary expedition, in which he advanced from the lake of Mexico to the western extremities of Honduras,^m they infused the same suspicions into the mind of their master, and prevailed on him to order a solemn inquest to be made into his conduct, with powers to the licentiate Ponce de Leon, in-

1525. trusted with that commission, to seize his person, if he should find that expedient, and send him prisoner to Spain."

Cortes returns to Spain. The sudden death of Ponce de Leon, a few days after his arrival in New Spain, prevented the execution of this commission.

But as the object of his appointment was known, the mind of Cortes was deeply wounded with this unexpected return for services, which far exceeded whatever any subject of Spain had rendered to his sovereign. He endeavoured, however, to maintain his station, and to recover the confidence of the court. But every person in office, who had arrived from Spain since the conquest, was a spy upon his conduct, and with malicious ingenuity gave an unfavourable representation of all his actions. The apprehensions of Charles and his ministers increased.

1528. A new commission of inquiry was issued, with more extensive powers, and various precautions were taken in order to prevent or to punish him, if he should be so presumptuous as to attempt what was inconsistent with the fidelity of a subject.ⁿ Cortes beheld the approaching crisis of his fortune with all the violent emotions natural to a haughty mind, conscious of high desert, and receiving unworthy treatment. But though some of his desperate followers urged him to assert his

^m See Note LXX.

ⁿ Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 14, 15.

* Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 15. dec. 4. lib. ii. c. 1. lib. iv. c. 9, 10. B. Díaz, c. 174 196. Gozala Cron. c. 166.

own rights against his ungrateful country, and with a bold hand to seize that power which the courtiers meanly accused him of coveting,^p he retained such self-command, or was actuated with such sentiments of loyalty, as to reject their dangerous counsels, and to choose the only course in which he could secure his own dignity, without departing from his duty. He resolved not to expose himself to the ignominy of a trial, in that country which had been the scene of his triumphs; but, without waiting for the arrival of his judges, to repair directly to Castile, and commit himself and his cause to the justice and generosity of his sovereign.^q

His reception there. Cortes appeared in his native country with the splendour that suited the conqueror of a mighty kingdom. He brought with him a great part of his wealth, many jewels and ornaments of great value, several curious productions of the country,^r and was attended by some Mexicans of the first rank, as well as by the most considerable of his own officers. His arrival in Spain removed at once every suspicion and fear that had been entertained with respect to his intentions. The emperor, having now nothing to apprehend from the designs of Cortes, received him like a person whom consciousness of his own innocence had brought into the presence of his master, and who was entitled, by the eminence of his services, to the highest marks of distinction and respect. The order of St. Jago, the title of Marquis del Valle de Guaxaca, the grant of an ample territory in New Spain, were successively bestowed upon him; and as his manners were correct and elegant, although he had passed the greater part of his life among rough adventurers, the emperor admitted him to the same familiar intercourse

^p B. Diaz, c. 194.

^q Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 8.

^r See Note LXXI.

with himself, that was enjoyed by noblemen of the first rank.*

But, amidst those external proofs of regard, symptoms of remaining distrust appeared. Though Cortes earnestly solicited to be reinstated in the government of New Spain, Charles, too sagacious to commit such an important charge to a man whom he had once suspected, peremptorily refused to invest him again with powers which he might find it impossible to

1530. control. Cortes, though dignified with new titles, returned to Mexico with diminished authority. The military department, with powers to attempt new discoveries, was left in his hands; but the supreme direction of civil affairs was placed in a board, called *The Audience of New Spain*. At a subsequent period, when, upon the increase of the colony, the exertion of authority more united and extensive became necessary, Antonio de Mendoza, a nobleman of high rank, was sent thither as *Viceroy*, to take the government into his hands.

New
schemes of
Cortes. This division of power in New Spain proved, as was unavoidable, the source of perpetual dissension, which embittered the life of Cortes, and thwarted all his schemes. As he had now no opportunity to display his active talents but in attempting new discoveries, he formed various schemes for that purpose, all of which bear impressions of a genius that delighted in what was bold and splendid. He early entertained an idea, that, either by steering through the gulf of Florida along the east coast of North America, some strait would be found that communicated with the western ocean; or that, by examining the isthmus of Darien, some passage would be discovered between the North and South seas.†

* Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 1. lib. vi. c. 4. B. Diaz, c. 196. Gom. Cron. c. 192.

† Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 294. B.

But having been disappointed in his expectations with respect to both, he now confined his views to such voyages of discovery as he could make from the ports of New Spain in the South sea. There he fitted out successively several small squadrons, which either perished in the attempt, or returned without making any discovery of moment. Cortes,

^{1536.} weary of intrusting the conduct of his operations to others, took the command of a new armament in person, and, after enduring incredible hardships, and encountering dangers of every species, he discovered the large peninsula of California, and surveyed the greater part of the gulf which separates it from New Spain. The discovery of a country of such extent would have reflected credit on a common adventurer; but it could add little new honour to the name of Cortes, and was far from satisfying the sanguine expectations which he had formed." Disgusted with ill success, to which he had not been accustomed, and weary of contesting with adversaries to whom he considered it as a disgrace to be opposed, he once more sought
^{1540.} for redress in his native country.

But his reception there was very different from that which gratitude, and even decency, ought to have secured for him. The merit of his ancient exploits was already, in a great measure, forgotten, or eclipsed by the fame of recent and more valuable conquests in another quarter of America. No service of moment was now expected from a man of declining years, and who begun to be unfortunate. The emperor behaved to him with cold civility; his ministers treated him sometimes with neglect, sometimes with insolence. His grievances received no redress; his claims were urged without effect;

ⁿ Herrera, dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 9, 10. dec. 8. lib. vi. c. 14. Venegas Hist. of California. i. 125. Lorenziana Hist. p. 322, &c.

and after several years spent in fruitless application to ministers and judges, an occupation the most irksome and mortifying to a man of high spirit, who had moved in a sphere where he was more accustomed to command than to solicit, Cortes
His death. ended his days on the 2d of December, 1547, in the sixty-second year of his age. His fate was the same with that of all the persons who distinguished themselves in the discovery or conquest of the New World. Envied by his contemporaries, and ill requited by the court which he served, he has been admired and celebrated by succeeding ages. Which has formed the most just estimate of his character, an impartial consideration of his actions must determine.

THE
HISTORY OF AMERICA.

BOOK VI.

1523.
Schemes
for dis-
covering.
Peru.

FROM the time that Nugnez de Balboa discovered the great Southern ocean, and received the first obscure hints concerning the opulent countries with which it might open a communication, the wishes and schemes of every enterprising person in the colonies of Darien and Panama were turned towards the wealth of those unknown regions. In an age when the spirit of adventure was so ardent and vigorous, that large fortunes were wasted, and the most alarming dangers braved, in pursuit of discoveries merely possible, the faintest ray of hope was followed with an eager expectation, and the slightest information was sufficient to inspire such perfect confidence, as conducted men to the most arduous undertakings.^a

Accordingly, several armaments were fitted out in order to explore and take possession of the countries to the east of Panama, but under the conduct of leaders whose talents and resources were unequal to the attempt.^b As the excursions of those adventurers did not extend beyond the limits of the province to which the Spaniards have given the name of Tierra Firme, a mountainous region covered with woods, thinly inhabited, and extremely unhealthy, they returned with dismal accounts con-

^a See Note LXXII.

^b Calancha Coronica, p. 100.

cerning the distresses to which they had been exposed, and the unpromising aspect of the places which they had visited. Damped by these tidings, the rage for discovery in that direction abated; and it became the general opinion, that Balboa had founded visionary hopes, on the tale of an ignorant Indian, ill understood, or calculated to deceive.

1524. But there were three persons settled in
Under- Panama, on whom the circumstances which
taken by Pizarro, deterred others made so little impression,
Almagro, that at the very moment when all considered
and Luque. Balboa's expectations of discovering a rich country, by steering towards the east, as chimerical, they resolved to attempt the execution of his scheme. The names of those extraordinary men were Francisco Pizarro, Diego de Almagro, and Hernando Luque. Pizarro was the natural son of a gentleman of an honourable family by a very low woman, and, according to the cruel fate which often attends the offspring of unlawful love, had been so totally neglected in his youth by the author of his birth, that he seems to have destined him never to rise beyond the condition of his mother. In consequence of this ungenerous idea, he set him, when bordering on manhood, to keep hogs. But the aspiring mind of young Pizarro disdaining that ignoble occupation, he abruptly abandoned his charge, enlisted as a soldier, and, after serving some years in Italy, embarked for America, which, by opening such a boundless range to active talents, allured every adventurer, whose fortune was not equal to his ambitious thoughts. There Pizarro early distinguished himself. With a temper of mind no less daring than the constitution of his body was robust, he was foremost in every danger, patient under the greatest hardships, and unsubdued by any fatigue. Though so illiterate that he could not even read, he was

soon considered as a man formed to command. Every operation committed to his conduct proved successful, as, by a happy but rare conjunction, he united perseverance with ardour, and was as cautious in executing, as he was bold in forming his plans. By engaging early in active life, without any resource but his own talents and industry, and by depending on himself alone in his struggles to emerge from obscurity, he acquired such a thorough knowledge of affairs, and of men, that he was fitted to assume a superior part in conducting the former, and in governing the latter.^c

Almagro had as little to boast of his descent as Pizarro. The one was a bastard, the other a foundling. Bred, like his companion, in the camp, he yielded not to him in any of the soldierly qualities of intrepid valour, indefatigable activity, or insurmountable constancy in enduring the hardships inseparable from military service in the New World. But in Almagro these virtues were accompanied with the openness, generosity, and candour, natural to men whose profession is arms; in Pizarro, they were united with the address, the craft, and the dissimulation of a politician, with the art of concealing his own purposes, and with sagacity to penetrate into those of other men.

Hernando de Luque was an ecclesiastic, who acted both as priest and schoolmaster at Panama, and, by means which the contemporary writers have not described, had amassed riches that inspired him with thoughts of rising to greater eminence.

Such were the men destined to overturn
 Terms of their association. one of the most extensive empires on the
 face of the earth. Their confederacy for this
 purpose was authorized by Pedrarias, the governor of

^c Herrera, dec. 1 & 2. *passim*, dec. 4. lib. vi. c. 107. Gomara Hist. c. 144. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 9.

Panama. Each engaged to employ his whole fortune in the adventure. Pizarro, the least wealthy of the three, as he could not throw so large a sum as his associates into the common stock, engaged to take the department of greatest fatigue and danger, and to command in person the armament which was to go first upon discovery. Almagro offered to conduct the supplies of provisions and reinforcements of troops, of which Pizarro might stand in need. Luque was to remain at Panama to negotiate with the governor, and superintend whatever was carrying on for the general interest. As the spirit of enthusiasm uniformly accompanied that of adventure in the New World, and by that strange union both acquired an increase of force, this confederacy, formed by ambition and avarice, was confirmed by the most solemn act of religion. Luque celebrated mass, divided a consecrated host into three, and reserving one part to himself, gave the other two to his associates, of which they partook ; and thus, in the name of the Prince of Peace, ratified a contract of which plunder and bloodshed were the objects.^d

Their first attempt. The attempt was begun with a force more suited to the humble condition of the three associates, than to the greatness of the enterprise in which they were engaged. Pizarro set sail
Nov. 14. from Panama with a single vessel, of small burden, and a hundred and twelve men. But in that age, so little were the Spaniards acquainted with the peculiarities of climate in America, that the time which Pizarro chose for his departure was the most improper in the whole year ; the periodical winds which were then set in, being directly adverse to the course which he proposed to steer.* After beating about for seventy days, with much danger

^d Herrera, dec. 3. lib. vi. c. 13. Zarate, lib. i. c. 1.

* Herrera, dec. 4. lib. ii. c. 8. Xerez, p. 179.

and incessant fatigue, Pizarro's progress towards the south-east was not greater than what a skilful navigator will now make in as many hours. He touched at several places on the coast of *Tierra Firme*, but found everywhere the same uninviting country which former adventurers had described; the low grounds converted into swamps by an overflowing of rivers; the higher, covered with impervious woods; few inhabitants, and those fierce and hostile. Famine, fatigue, frequent rencounters with the natives, and, above all, the distempers of a moist, sultry climate, combined in wasting his slender band of followers.

Attended with little success. The undaunted resolution of their leader continued, however, for some time, to sustain their spirits, although no sign had yet appeared of discovering those golden regions to which he had promised to conduct them. At length he was obliged to abandon that inhospitable coast, and retire to Chuchama, opposite to the pearl islands, where he hoped to receive a supply of provisions and troops from Panama.

But Almagro having sailed from that port with seventy men, stood directly towards that part of the continent where he hoped to meet with his associates. Not finding him there, he landed his soldiers, who, in searching for their companions, underwent the same distresses, and were exposed to the same dangers, which had driven them out of the country. Repulsed at length by the Indians in a sharp conflict, in which their leader lost one of his eyes by the wound of an arrow, they likewise were compelled to reembark. Chance led them to the place of Pizarro's retreat, where they found some consolation in recounting to each other their adventures, and comparing their sufferings. As

June 24.

Almagro had advanced as far as the river St. Juan, in the province of Popayan, where both the

country and inhabitants appeared with a more promising aspect, that dawn of better fortune was sufficient to determine such sanguine projectors not to abandon their scheme, notwithstanding all that they had suffered in prosecuting it.^f

1526. Almagro repaired to Panama, in hopes of
 They re- cru iting their shattered troops. But what
 sume the he and Pizarro had suffered, gave his coun-
 undertak- trymen such an unfavourable idea of the ser-
 ing. vice, that it was with difficulty he could levy four-
 score men.^g Feeble as this reinforcement was, Al-
 magro took the command of it, and having joined
 Pizarro, they did not hesitate about resuming their
 operations. After a long series of disasters and dis-
 appointments, not inferior to those which they had
 already experienced, part of the armament reached
 the bay of St. Matthew, on the coast of Quito, and
 landing at Tacamez, to the south of the river of
 Emeraulds, they beheld a country more champaign
 and fertile than any they had yet discovered in
 the Southern ocean, the natives clad in garments of
 woollen or cotton stuff, and adorned with several
 trinkets of gold and silver.

But, notwithstanding those favourable appearances, magnified beyond the truth, both by the vanity of the persons who brought the report from Tacamez, and by the fond imagination of those who listened to them, Pizarro and Almagro durst not venture to invade a country so populous with a handful of men enfeebled by fatigue and diseases. They retired to the small island of Gallo, where Pizarro remained with part of the troops, and his associate returned to Panama, in hopes of bringing such a reinforcement as might enable them to take possession of the opulent territories, whose existence seemed to be no longer doubtful.^h

^f Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 11, 12. See Note LXXIII.

^g Zarate, lib. i. c. 1.

^h Xerez, 161. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 13.

Pizarro recalled by the governor of Panama.

But some of the adventurers, less enterprising, or less hardy than their leaders, having secretly conveyed lamentable accounts of their sufferings and losses to their friends at Panama, Almagro met with an unfavourable reception from Pedro de los Rios, who had succeeded Pedrarias in the government of that settlement. After weighing the matter with that cold economical prudence, which appears the first of all virtues to persons whose limited faculties are incapable of conceiving or executing great designs, he concluded an expedition, attended with such certain waste of men, to be so detrimental to an infant and feeble colony, that he not only prohibited the raising of new levies, but dispatched a vessel to bring home Pizarro and his companions from the island of Gallo. Almagro and Luque, though deeply affected with those measures, which they could not prevent, and durst not oppose, found means of communicating their sentiments privately to Pizarro, and exhorted him not to relinquish an enterprise that was the foundation of all their hopes, and the only means of re-establishing their reputation and fortune, which were both on the decline. Pizarro's mind, bent with inflexible obstinacy on all its purposes, needed no incentive to persist in the scheme. He peremptorily refused to obey the governor of Panama's orders, and employed all his address and eloquence in persuading his men not to abandon him. But the incredible calamities to which they had been exposed were still so recent in their memories, and the thoughts of revisiting their families and friends after a long absence, rushed with such joy into their minds, that when Pizarro drew a line upon the sand with his sword, permitting such as wished to return home to pass over it, only thirteen of all the daring veterans in his service had resolution to remain with their commander.¹

Persists in his designs.

¹Herrera, dec. 3. lib. x. c. 2, 3. Zarate, lib. i. c. 2. Xerez, 181. Gomara, c. 109.

This small, but determined band, whose names the Spanish historians record with deserved praise, as the persons to whose persevering fortitude their country is indebted for the most valuable of all its American possessions, fixed their residence in the island of Gorgona. This, as it was farther removed from the coast than Gallo, and uninhabited, they considered as a more secure retreat, where, unmolested, they might wait for supplies from Panama, which they trusted that the activity of their associates would be able to procure. Almagro and Luque were not inattentive or cold solicitors, and their incessant importunity was seconded by the general voice of the colony, which exclaimed loudly against the infamy of exposing brave men, engaged in the public service, and chargeable with no error, but what flowed from an excess of zeal and courage, to perish like the most odious criminal in a desert island. Overcome by those entreaties and expostulations, the governor at last consented to send a small vessel to their relief. But that he might not seem to encourage Pizarro to any new enterprise, he would not permit one landman to embark on board of it.

By this time, Pizarro and his companions had remained five months in an island, infamous for the most unhealthy climate in that region of America.^k During all this period, their eyes were turned towards Panama, in hopes of succour from their countrymen; but worn out at length with fruitless expectations, and dispirited with suffering hardships of which they saw no end, they, in despair, came to a resolution of committing themselves to the ocean on a float, rather than continue in that detestable abode. But, on the arrival of the vessel from Panama, they were transported with such joy, that all their sufferings were forgotten. Their hopes revived, and, with a rapid transition, not unnatural among men accustomed by their mode of life

Hardships
he en-
dured.

^k See Note LXXIV

to sudden vicissitudes of fortune, high confidence succeeding to extreme dejection, Pizarro easily induced not only his own followers, but the crew of the vessel from Panama, to resume his former scheme with fresh ardour. Instead of returning to Panama, they stood towards the south-east, and more fortunate in this than in any of their past efforts, they, on the twentieth day after their departure from Gorgona, discovered the coast of Peru. After touching at several villages near the shore, which they found to be nowise inviting, they landed at Tumbes, a place of some note, about three degrees south of the line, distinguished for its stately temple, and a palace of the *Incas* or sovereigns of the country.¹ There the Spaniards feasted their eyes with the first view of the opulence and civilization of the Peruvian empire. They beheld a country fully peopled, and cultivated with an appearance of regular industry; the natives decently clothed, and possessed of ingenuity so far surpassing the other inhabitants of the New World, as to have the use of tame domestic animals. But what chiefly attracted their notice, was such a show of gold and silver, not only in the ornaments of their persons and temples, but in several vessels and utensils for common use, formed of those precious metals, as left no room to doubt that they abounded with profusion in the country. Pizarro and his companions seemed now to have attained to the completion of their most sanguine hopes, and fancied that all their wishes and dreams of rich domains, and inexhaustible treasures, would soon be realized.

Returns to
Panama.

But with the slender force then under his command, Pizarro could only view the rich country of which he hoped hereafter to obtain possession. He ranged, however, for some time along the coast, maintaining every where a peaceable intercourse with the natives, no less astonished at their new visitants, than

¹ Calancha, p. 103.

the Spaniards were with the uniform appearance of opulence and cultivation which they beheld. Having
 1527. explored the country so far as was requisite to ascertain the importance of the discovery, Pizarro procured from the inhabitants some of their *Llamas* or tame cattle, to which the Spaniards gave the name of sheep, some vessels of gold and silver, as well as some specimens of their other works of ingenuity, and two young men, whom he proposed to instruct in the Castilian language, that they might serve as interpreters in the expedition which he meditated. With these he arrived at Panama, towards the close of the third year from the time of his departure thence.^m No adventurer of the age suffered hardships or encountered dangers which equal those to which he was exposed during this long period. The patience with which he endured the one, and the fortitude with which he surmounted the other, exceed whatever is recorded in the history of the New World, where so many romantic displays of those virtues occur.

1528. Neither the splendid relation that Pizarro
 New schemes of the associates. gave of the incredible opulence of the country which he had discovered, nor his bitter complaints on account of that unseasonable recall of his forces, which had put it out of his power to attempt making any settlement there, could move the governor of Panama to swerve from his former plan of conduct. He still contended, that the colony was not in a condition to invade such a mighty empire, and refused to authorize an expedition which he foresaw would be so alluring that it might ruin the province in which he presided, by an effort beyond its strength. His coldness, however, did not in any degree abate the ardour of the three associates; but they perceived that they could not carry their scheme into execution, without the countenance of superior authority, and must solicit their sovereign to

^m Herrera, dec. 3. lib. x. c. 3—6. dec. 4. lib. ii. c. 7, 8. Vega, 2. lib. i. c. 10—14. Zarate, lib. i. c. 2. Benzo Hist. Novi Orbis, lib. iii. c. 1.

grant that permission which they could not extort from his delegate. With this view, after adjusting among themselves, that Pizarro should claim the station of governor, Almagro that of lieutenant-governor, and Luque the dignity of bishop in the country which they proposed to conquer, they sent Pizarro as their agent to Spain, though their fortunes were now so much exhausted by the repeated efforts which they had made, that they found some difficulty in borrowing the small sum requisite towards equipping him for the voyage."

Pizarro
sent to
Spain to
negotiate. Pizarro lost no time in repairing to court, and new as the scene might be to him, he appeared before the emperor with the unembarrassed dig-

nity of a man conscious of what his services merited; and he conducted his negotiations with an insinuating dexterity of address, which could not have been expected either from his education or former habits of life. His feeling description of his own sufferings, and his pompous account of the country which he had discovered, confirmed by the specimens of its productions which he exhibited, made such an impression both on Charles and his ministers, that they not only approved of the intended expedition, but seemed to be interested in the success of its leader. Presuming on those dispositions in his favour, Pizarro paid little attention to

Neglects
his as-
sociates. the interest of his associates. As the pretensions of Luque did not interfere with his own, he obtained for him the ecclesiastical dignity to which

he aspired. For Almagro, he claimed only the command of the fortress which should be erected at Tumbez. To himself he secured whatever his boundless ambition

July 26.
And pro-
duces the
supreme
command
to himself. could desire. He was appointed governor, captain-general, and adelantado of all the country which he had discovered, and hoped to conquer, with supreme authority, civil as well as military; and with full right to all the privileges and

emoluments usually granted to adventurers in the New World. His jurisdiction was declared to extend two hundred leagues along the coast to the south of the river St. Jago; to be independent of the governor of Panama; and he had power to nominate all the officers who were to serve under him. In return for those concessions, which cost the court of Spain nothing, as the enjoyment of them depended upon the success of Pizarro's own efforts, he engaged to raise two hundred and fifty men, and to provide the ships, arms, and warlike stores requisite towards subjecting to the crown of Castile the country of which the government was allotted to him.

Inconsiderable as the body of men was which Pizarro had undertaken to raise, his funds and credit were so low that he could hardly complete half the number; and after obtaining his patents from the crown, he was obliged to steal privately out of the port of Seville, in order to elude the scrutiny of the officers who had it in charge to examine, whether he had fulfilled the stipulations in his contract.^o Before his departure, however, he received some supply of money from Cortes, who having returned to Spain about this time, was willing to contribute his aid towards enabling an ancient companion, with whose talents and courage he was well acquainted, to begin a career of glory similar to that which he himself had finished.^p

He landed at Nombre de Dios, and marched across the isthmus to Panama, accompanied by his three brothers, Ferdinand, Juan, and Gonzalo, of whom the first was born in lawful wedlock, the two latter, like himself, were of illegitimate birth, and by Francisco de Alcantara, his mother's brother. They were all in the prime of life, and of such abilities and courage, as fitted them to take a distinguished part in his subsequent transactions.

Slender
force he
was able
to raise.
1529.

^o Herrera, dec. 4. lib. vii. c. 9.

^p Ibid. lib. vii. c. 10.

1530.
His recon-
ciliation
with Al-
magro.

On his arrival at Panama, Pizarro found Almagro so much exasperated at the manner in which he had conducted his negotiation, that he not only refused to act any longer in concert with a man by whose perfidy he had been excluded from the power and honours to which he had a just claim, but laboured to form a new association, in order to thwart or to rival his former confederate in his discoveries. Pizarro, however, had more wisdom and address than to suffer a rupture so fatal to all his schemes, to become irreparable. By offering voluntarily to relinquish the office of adelantado, and promising to concur in soliciting that title, with an independent government, for Almagro, he gradually mitigated the rage of an open-hearted soldier, which had been violent, but was not implacable. Luque, highly satisfied with having been successful in all his own pretensions, cordially seconded Pizarro's endeavours. A reconciliation was effected, and the confederacy renewed on its original terms, that the enterprise should be carried on at the common expense of the associates, and the profits accruing from it should be equally divided among them.⁹

Their ar-
mament.

Even after their re-union, and the utmost efforts of their interest, three small vessels, with a hundred and eighty soldiers, thirty-six of whom were horsemen, composed the armament which they were able to fit out. But the astonishing progress of the Spaniards in America had inspired them with such ideas of their own superiority, that Pizarro did not
1531.
February. hesitate to sail with this contemptible force to invade a great empire. Almagro was left at Panama, as formerly, to follow him with what reinforcement of men he should be able to muster. As the season for embarking was properly chosen, and the course of navigation between Panama and Peru was

⁹ Herrera, dec. 4. lib. vii. c. 9. Zárate, lib. i. c. 3. Vega, 2. lib. i. c. 14.

now better known, Pizarro completed the voyage in thirteen days; though by the force of the winds and currents, he was carried above a hundred leagues to the north of Tumbez, the place of his destination, and obliged to land his troops in the bay of St. Matthew.

Lands in
Peru.

Without losing a moment, he began to advance towards the south, taking care, however, not to depart far from the sea-shore, both that he might easily effect a junction with the supplies which he expected from Panama, and secure a retreat in case of any disaster, by keeping as near as possible to his ships. But as the country in several parts on the coast of Peru is barren, unhealthful, and thinly peopled; as the Spaniards had to pass all the rivers near their mouth, where the body of water is greatest, and as the imprudence of Pizarro, in attacking the natives when he should have studied to gain their confidence, had forced them to abandon their habitations; famine, fatigue, and diseases of various kinds, brought upon him and his followers calamities hardly inferior to those which they had endured in their former expedition. What they now experienced corresponded so ill with the alluring description of the country given by Pizarro, that many began to reproach him, and every soldier must have become cold to the service, if, even in this unfertile region of Peru, they had not met with some appearances of wealth and cultivation, which seemed to justify the report of their leader. At length they reached the province of Coaque; and, having surprised the principal settlement of the natives, they seized their vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, to the amount of thirty thousand pesos, with other booty of such value, as dispelled all their doubts, and inspired the most desponding with sanguine hopes.¹

His mea-
sures for
obtaining

Pizarro himself was so much delighted with this rich spoil, which he considered as the first

¹ Herrera, dec. 4. lib. vii. c. 9. lib. ii. c. i. Xerez, 182.

a reinforce- ment. fruits of a land abounding with treasure, that he instantly dispatched one of his ships to Panama with a large remittance to Almagro; and another to Nicaragua with a considerable sum to several persons of influence in that province, in hopes of alluring adventurers, by this early display of the wealth which he had acquired. Meanwhile, he continued his march along the coast, and disdaining to employ any means of reducing the natives but force, he attacked them with such violence in their scattered habitations, as compelled them either to retire into the interior country, or to submit to his yoke. This sudden appearance of invaders, whose aspect and manners were so strange, and whose power seemed to be so irresistible, made the same dreadful impression as in other parts of America. Pizarro hardly met with resistance until he attacked the island of Puna in the bay of Guayquil. As that was better peopled than the country through which he had passed, and its inhabitants fiercer and less civilized than those of the continent, they defended themselves with such obstinate valour, that Pizarro spent six months in reducing them to subjection. From Puna he proceeded to Tumbez, where the distempers which raged among his men compelled him to remain for three months.*

Receives
some, and
continues
to advance.

While he was thus employed, he began to reap advantage from his attention to spread the fame of his first success to Coaque. Two different detachments arrived from Nicaragua, which, though neither exceeded thirty men, he considered as a reinforcement of great consequence to his feeble band, especially as the one was under the command of

Sebastian Benalcazar, and the other of Hernando

1532.

Soto, officers not inferior in merit and reputation to any who had served in America. From Tum-

* P. Sancho ap. Ramus. iii. p. 371. F. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. vii. c. 18. lib. ix. c. i. Zarate, lib. ii. c. 2, 3. Xerez, p. 182, &c.

May 16. bez he proceeded to the river Piura, and in an advantageous station near the mouth of it, he established the first Spanish colony in Peru; to which he gave the name of St. Michael.

As Pizarro continued to advance towards the centre of the Peruvian empire, he gradually received more full information concerning its extent and policy, as well as the situation of its affairs at that juncture. Without some knowledge of these, he could not have conducted his operations with propriety; and without a suitable attention to them, it is impossible to account for the progress which the Spaniards had already made, or to unfold the causes of their subsequent success.

State of the Peruvian empire. At the time when the Spaniards invaded Peru, the dominions of its sovereigns extended in length, from north to south, above fifteen hundred miles along the Pacific ocean. Its breadth, from east to west, was much less considerable; being uniformly bounded by the vast ridge of the Andes, stretching from its one extremity to the other. Peru, like the rest of the New World, was originally possessed by small independent tribes, differing from each other in manners, and in their forms of rude policy. All, however, were so little civilized, that, if the traditions concerning their mode of life, preserved among their descendants, deserve credit, they must be classed among the most unimproved savages of America. Strangers to every species of cultivation or regular industry, without any fixed residence, and unacquainted with those sentiments and obligations which form the first bond of social union, they are said to have roamed about naked in the forests, with which the country was then covered, more like wild beasts than like men. After they had struggled for several ages with the hardships and calamities which are inevitable in such a state, and when no circumstance seemed to indicate the approach of any uncommon effort towards improvement,

we are told that there appeared, on the banks of the lake Titiaca, a man and woman of majestic form, clothed in decent garments. They declared themselves to be children of the Sun, sent by their beneficent parent, who beheld with pity the miseries of the human race, to instruct and to reclaim them. At their persuasion, enforced by reverence for the divinity in whose name they were supposed to speak, several of the dispersed savages united together, and receiving their commands as heavenly injunctions, followed them to Cuzco, where they settled and began to lay the foundations of a city.

Manco Capac and Mama Ocollo, for such were the names of those extraordinary personages, having thus collected some wandering tribes, formed that social union, which, by multiplying the desires, and uniting the efforts of the human species, excites industry, and leads to improvement. Manco Capac instructed the men in agriculture, and other useful arts. Mama Ocollo taught the women to spin and to weave. By the labour of the one sex, subsistence became less precarious; by that of the other, life was rendered more comfortable. After securing the objects of first necessity in an infant state, by providing food, raiment, and habitations, for the rude people of whom he took charge, Manco Capac turned his attention towards introducing such laws and policy as might perpetuate their happiness. By his institutions, which shall be more particularly explained hereafter, the various relations in private life were established, and the duties resulting from them prescribed with such propriety, as gradually formed a barbarous people to decency of manners. In public administration, the functions of persons in authority were so precisely defined, and the subordination of those under their jurisdiction maintained with such a steady hand, that the society in which he presided, soon assumed the aspect of a regular and well-governed state.

Thus, according to the Indian tradition, was founded the empire of the *Incas* or *Lords* of Peru. At first its extent was small. The territory of Manco Capac did not reach above eight leagues from Cuzco. But within its narrow precincts he exercised absolute and uncontrolled authority. His successors, as their dominions extended, arrogated a similar jurisdiction over the new subjects which they acquired; the despotism of Asia was not more complete. The Incas were not only obeyed as monarchs, but revered as divinities. Their blood was held to be sacred, and, by prohibiting intermarriages with the people, was never contaminated by mixing with that of any other race. The family, thus separated from the rest of the nation, was distinguished by peculiarities in dress and ornaments, which it was unlawful for others to assume. The monarch himself appeared with ensigns of royalty reserved for him alone; and received from his subjects marks of obsequious homage and respect, which approached almost to adoration.

But, among the Peruvians, this unbounded power of their monarchs seems to have been uniformly accompanied with attention to the good of their subjects. It was not the rage of conquest, if we may believe the accounts of their countrymen, that prompted the Incas to extend their dominions, but the desire of diffusing the blessings of civilization, and the knowledge of the arts which they possessed, among the barbarous people whom they reduced. During a succession of twelve monarchs, it is said that not one deviated from this beneficent character.¹

When the Spaniards first visited the coast of Peru, in the year 1526, Huana Capac, the twelfth monarch from the founder of the state, was seated on the throne. He is represented as a prince distinguished not only for the pacific virtues peculiar to the race, but eminent

¹ Cieca de Leon, Chron. c. 44. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. x. c. 4. dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 17.

for his martial talents. By his victorious arms the kingdom of Quito was subjected, a conquest of such extent and importance as almost doubled the power of the Peruvian empire. He was fond of residing in the capital of that valuable province, which he had added to his dominions ; and notwithstanding the ancient and fundamental law of the monarchy against polluting the royal blood by any foreign alliance, he married the daughter of the vanquished monarch of Quito. She bore him a son named Atahualpa, whom, on his death at Quito, which seems to have happened about the year 1529, he appointed his successor in that kingdom, leaving the rest of his dominions to Huascar, his eldest son, by another of the royal race. Greatly as the Peruvians revered the memory of a monarch who had reigned with greater reputation and splendour than any of his predecessors, the destination of Huana Capac concerning the succession appeared so repugnant to a maxim coëval with the empire, and founded on authority deemed sacred, that it was no sooner known at Cuzco than it excited general disgust. Encouraged by those sentiments of his subjects, Huascar required his brother to renounce the government of Quito, and to acknowledge him as his lawful superior. But it had been the first care of Atahualpa to gain a large body of troops which had accompanied his father to Quito. These were the flower of the Peruvian warriors, to whose valour Huana Capac had been indebted for all his victories. Relying on their support, Atahualpa first eluded his brother's demand, and then marched against him in hostile array.

Thus the ambition of two young men, the title of the one founded on ancient usage, and that of the other asserted by the veteran troops, involved Peru in civil war, a calamity to which, under a succession of virtuous princes, it had hitherto been a stranger. In such a contest the issue was obvious. The force of arms

triumphed over the authority of laws. Atahualpa remained victorious, and made a cruel use of his victory. Conscious of the defect in his own title to the crown, he attempted to exterminate the royal race, by putting to death all the children of the Sun descended from Manco Capac, whom he could seize either by force or stratagem. From a political motive, the life of his unfortunate rival Huascar, who **had** been taken prisoner in a battle which decided the fate of the empire, was prolonged for some time, that by issuing orders in his name the usurper might more easily establish his own authority.^u

Favour-
able to the
progress of
Pizarro.

When Pizarro landed in the bay of St. Mathe^w, this civil war raged between the two brothers in its greatest fury. Had he made any hostile attempt in his former visit to Peru in the year 1527, he must then have encountered the force of a powerful state, united under a monarch, possessed of capacity as well as courage, and unembarrassed with any care that could divert him from opposing his progress. But at this time, the two competitors, though they received early accounts of the arrival and violent proceedings of the Spaniards, were so intent upon the operations of a war, which they deemed more interesting, that they paid no attention to the motions of an enemy, too inconsiderable in number to excite any great alarm, and to whom, it would be easy, as they imagined, to give a check when more at leisure.

He avails
himself of
it and ad-
vances.

By this fortunate coincidence of events, whereof Pizarro could have no foresight, and of which, from his defective mode of intercourse with the people of the country, he remained long ignorant, he was permitted to carry on his operations unmolested, and advanced to the centre of a great empire before one effort of its power was exerted to stop his

^u Zarate, lib. i. c. 15. Vega, 1. lib. ix. c. 12. and 32—40. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. i. c. 2. lib. iii. c. 17.

career. During their progress, the Spaniards had acquired some imperfect knowledge of this struggle between the two contending factions. The first complete information with respect to it, they received from messengers whom Huascar sent to Pizarro, in order to solicit his aid against Atahualpa, whom he represented as a rebel and a usurper.* Pizarro perceived at once the importance of this intelligence, and foresaw so clearly all the advantages which might be derived from this divided state of the kingdom, which he had invaded, that without waiting for the reinforcement which he expected from Panama, he determined to push forward, while intestine discord put it out of the power of the Peruvians to attack him with their whole force, and while, by taking part, as circumstances should incline him, with one of the competitors, he might be enabled with greater ease to crush both. Enterprising as the Spaniards of that age were in all their operations against Americans, and distinguished as Pizarro was among his countrymen for daring courage, we can hardly suppose, that, after having proceeded hitherto slowly, and with much caution, he would have changed at once his system of operation, and have ventured upon a measure so hazardous, without some new motive or prospect to justify it.

State of
his forces. As he was obliged to divide his troops, in order to leave a garrison in St. Michael, sufficient to defend a station of equal importance as a place of retreat in case of any disaster, and as a port for receiving any supplies which should come from Panama, he began his march with a very slender and ill-accounted train of followers. They consisted of sixty-two horsemen,* and a hundred and two foot-soldiers, of whom twenty were armed with cross-bows, and three with muskets. He directed his course towards Caxamalca, a small town at the distance of

* Zarate, lib. ii. c. 3.

* See Note LXXV.

twelve days' march from St. Michael, where Atahualpa was encamped with a considerable body of troops. Before he had proceeded far, an officer dispatched by the Inca met him with a valuable present from that prince, accompanied with a proffer of his alliance, and assurances of a friendly reception at Caxamalca. Pizarro, according to the usual artifice of his countrymen in America, pretended to come as the ambassador of a very powerful monarch, and declared that he was now advancing with an intention to offer Atahualpa his aid against those enemies who disputed his title to the throne.^y

Ideas of
the Peru-
vians con-
cerning
their de-
signs.

As the object of the Spaniards in entering their country was altogether incomprehensible to the Peruvians, they had formed various conjectures concerning it, without being able to decide whether they should consider their new guests as beings of a superior nature, who had visited them from some beneficent motive, or as formidable avengers of their crimes and enemies to their repose and liberty. The continual professions of the Spaniards, that they came to enlighten them with the knowledge of truth, and lead them in the way of happiness, favoured the former opinion; the outrages which they committed, their rapaciousness and cruelty, were awful confirmations of the latter. While in this state of uncertainty, Pizarro's declaration of his pacific intentions so far removed all the Inca's fears, that he determined to give him a friendly reception. In consequence of this resolution, the Spaniards were allowed to march in tranquillity across the sandy desert between St. Michael and Motupè, where the most feeble effort of an enemy, added to the unavoidable distresses which they suffered in passing through that comfortless region, must have proved fatal to them.^z From Motupè they advanced towards the mountains which encompassed the

^y Herrera, dec. 5. lib. i. c. 3. Xerez, p. 189.

^z See Note LXXVI.

low country of Peru, and passed through a defile so narrow and inaccessible, that a few men might have defended it against a numerous army. But here likewise, from the same inconsiderate credulity of the Inca, the Spaniards met with no opposition, and took quiet possession of a fort erected for the security of that important station. As they now approached near to Caxamalca, Atahualpa renewed his professions of friendship; and as an evidence of their sincerity, sent them presents of greater value than the former.

Arrive at
Caxa-
malca.

On entering Caxamalca, Pizarro took possession of a large court, on one side of which was a house which the Spanish historians call a palace of the Inca, and on the other a temple of the Sun, the whole surrounded with a strong rampart or wall of earth. When he had posted his troops in this advantageous station, he dispatched his brother Ferdinand and Hernando Soto to the camp of Atahualpa, which was about a league distant from the town. He instructed them to confirm the declaration which he had formerly made of his pacific disposition, and to desire an interview with the Inca, that he might explain more fully the intention of the Spaniards in visiting his country. They were treated with all the respectful hospitality usual among the Peruvians in the reception of their most cordial friends, and Atahualpa, promised to visit the Spanish commander next day in his quarters. The decent deportment of the Peruvian monarch, the order of his court, and the reverence with which his subjects approached his person and obeyed his commands, astonished those Spaniards, who had never met in America with any thing more dignified than the petty cazique of a barbarous tribe. But their eyes were still more powerfully attracted by the vast profusion of wealth which they observed in the Inca's camp. The rich ornaments worn by him and his attendants, the vessels of gold and silver in which the repast of-

ferred to them was served up, the multitude of utensils of every kind formed of those precious metals, opened prospects far exceeding any idea of opulence that a European of the sixteenth century could form.

On their return to *Veracruz*, while their minds were yet warm with admiration and desire of the wealth which they had beheld, they gave such a description of it to their countrymen, as confirmed *Pizarro* in a resolution which he had already taken. From his own observation of American manners during his long service in the New World, as well as from the advantages which *Cortes* had derived from seizing *Montezuma*, he knew of what consequence it was to have the Inca in his power. For this purpose, he formed a plan as daring as it was perfidious. Notwithstanding the character that he had assumed of an ambassador from a powerful monarch, who courted an alliance with the Inca, and in violation of the repeated offers which he had made to him of his own friendship and assistance, he determined to avail himself of the unsuspecting simplicity with which *Atahualpa* relied on his professions, and to seize the person of the Inca during the interview to which he had invited him. He prepared for the execution of his scheme with the same deliberate arrangement, and with as little compunction, as if it had reflected no disgrace on himself or his country. He divided his cavalry into three small squadrons, under the command of his brother *Ferdinand*, *Soto*, and *Benitez*; his infantry were formed in one body, except twenty of most tried courage, whom he kept near his own person to support him in the dangerous service which he reserved for himself; the artillery, consisting of two field-pieces, and the cross-bowmen, were placed opposite to the avenue by which *Atahualpa* was to approach. All were commanded to keep within the

Perfidious
scheme of
Pizarro.

square, and not to move until the signal for action was given.

Nov. 16.

Visited by was all in motion. But as Atahualpa was solicited to appear with the greatest splendour and magnificence in his first interview with the strangers, the preparations for this were so tedious, that the day was far advanced before he began his march. Even then, lest the order of the procession should be deranged, he moved so slowly, that the Spaniards became impatient, and apprehensive that some suspicion of their intention might be the cause of this delay. In order to remove this, Pizarro dispatched one of his officers with fresh assurances of his friendly disposition. At length the Inca approached. First of all appeared four hundred men, in a uniform dress, as harbingers to clear the way before him. He himself, sitting on a throne or couch adorned with plumes of various colours, and almost covered with plates of gold and silver enriched with precious stones, was carried on the shoulders of his principal attendants. Behind him came some chief officers of his court, carried in the same manner. Several bands of singers and dancers accompanied this cavalcade; and the whole plain was covered with troops, amounting to more than thirty thousand men.

Strange
harangue
of father
Valverde.

As the Inca drew near the Spanish quarters, father Vincent Valverde, chaplain to the expedition, advanced with a crucifix in one hand, and a breviary in the other, and in a long discourse explained to him the doctrine of the creation, the fall of Adam, the incarnation, the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the appointment of St. Peter as God's viceregent on earth, the transmission of his apostolic power by succession to the popes, the donation made to the king of Castile by pope Alexander of all the regions of the New World. In consequence of all

this, he required Atahualpa to embrace the Christian faith, to acknowledge the supreme jurisdiction of the pope, and to submit to the king of Castile as his lawful sovereign; promising, if he complied instantly with this requisition, that the Castilian monarch would protect his dominions, and permit him to continue in the exercise of his royal authority; but if he should impudently refuse to obey this summons, he denounced war against him in his master's name, and threatened him with the most dreadful effects of his vengeance.

Reply of
the Inca.

This strange harangue, unfolding deep mysteries, and alluding to unknown facts, of which no power of eloquence could have conveyed at once a distinct idea to an American, was so lamely translated by an unskilful interpreter, little acquainted with the idiom of the Spanish tongue, and incapable of expressing himself with propriety in the language of the Inca, that its general tenor was altogether incomprehensible to Atahualpa. Some parts in it, of more obvious meaning, filled him with astonishment and indignation. His reply, however, was temperate. He began with observing, that he was lord of the dominions over which he reigned by hereditary succession; and added, that he could not conceive how a foreign priest should pretend to dispose of territories which did not belong to him; that if such a preposterous grant had been made, he, who was the rightful possessor, refused to confirm it; that he had no inclination to renounce the religious institutions established by his ancestors; nor would he forsake the service of the Sun, the immortal divinity whom he and his people revered, in order to worship the God of the Spaniards, who was subject to death; that with respect to other matters contained in his discourse, as he had never heard of them before, and did not now understand their meaning, he desired to know where the priest had learned things so extraordinary. In this book,"

answered Valverde, reaching out to him his breviary. The Inca opened it eagerly, and turning over the leaves, lifted it to his ear : " This," says he, " is silent : it tells me nothing ;" and threw it with disdain to the ground. The enraged monk, running towards his countrymen, cried out, " To arms, Christians, to arms ; the word of God is insulted ; avenge this profanation on those impious dogs.

Pizarro, who, during this long conference, Pizarro attacks the Peruvians, had with difficulty restrained his soldiers, eager to seize the rich spoils of which they had now so near a view, immediately gave the signal of assault. At once the martial music struck up, the cannon and muskets began to fire, the horse sallied out fiercely to the charge, the infantry rushed on sword in hand. The Peruvians, astonished at the suddenness of an attack which they did not expect, and dismayed with the destructive effect of the fire-arms, and the irresistible impression of the cavalry, fled with universal consternation on every side, without attempting either to annoy the enemy, or to defend themselves. Pizarro, at the head of his chosen band, advanced directly towards the Inca ; and though his nobles advanced around him with officious zeal, and fell in numbers at his feet, while they vied one with another in sacrificing their own lives, that they might cover the sacred person of their sovereign, the Spaniards soon penetrated to the royal And seizes the Inca. seat ; and Pizarro, seizing the Inca by the arm, dragged him to the ground, and carried him as a prisoner to his quarters. The fate of the monarch increased the precipitate flight of his followers. The Spaniards pursued them towards every quarter, and with deliberate and unrelenting barbarity continued to slaughter wretched fugitives, who never once offered to resist. The carnage did not cease until the close of day. Above four thousand Peruvians were killed.

Not a single Spaniard fell, nor was one wounded but Pizarro himself, whose hand was slightly hurt by one of his own soldiers, while struggling eagerly to lay hold on the Inca.

The plunder of the field was rich beyond any idea which the Spaniards had yet formed concerning the wealth of Peru, and they were so transported with the value of the acquisition, as well as the greatness of their success, that they passed the night in the extravagant exultation natural to indigent adventurers on such an extraordinary change of fortune.

Dejection
of the
Inca.

At first the captive monarch could hardly believe a calamity which he so little expected to be real. But he soon felt all the misery of his fate, and the dejection into which he sunk was in proportion to the height of grandeur from which he had fallen. Pizarro, afraid of losing all the advantages which he hoped to derive from the possession of such a prisoner, laboured to console him with professions of kindness and respect, that corresponded ill with his actions. By residing among the Spaniards, the Inca quickly discovered their ruling passion, which, indeed they were nowise solicitous to conceal, and by applying to that, made an attempt to recover his liberty. He offered as a ransom what astonished the Spaniards, even after all they now knew concerning the opulence of his kingdom. The apartment in which he was confined was twenty-two feet in length and sixteen in breadth; he undertook to fill it with vessels of gold as high as he could reach. Pizarro closed eagerly with this tempting proposal, and a line was drawn upon the walls of the chamber, to mark the stipulated height to which the treasure was to rise.

His offer
of a ran-
som.

Atahualpa, transported with having obtained some prospect of liberty, took measures instantly for fulfilling his part of the agreement, by sending messengers to Cuzco, Quito, and other places, where gold had been

amassed in largest quantities, either for adorning the temples of the gods, or the houses of the Inca, to bring what was necessary for completing his ransom directly to Caxamalca. Though Atahualpa was now in the custody of his enemies, yet so much were the Peruvians accustomed to respect every mandate issued by their sovereign, that his orders were executed with the greatest alacrity. Soothed with hopes of recovering his liberty by this means, the subjects of the Inca were afraid of endangering his life by forming any other scheme for his relief; and though the force of the empire was still entire, no preparations were made, and no army assembled to avenge their own wrongs or those of their monarch.^d The Spaniards remained in Caxamalca tranquil and unmolested. Small detachments of their number marched into remote provinces of the empire, and, instead of meeting with any opposition; were every where received with marks of the most submissive respect.^e

Almagro
arrives
with a re-
inforce-
ment.
December.

Inconsiderable as those parties were, and desirous as Pizarro might be to obtain some knowledge of the interior state of the country, he could not have ventured upon any diminution of his main body, if he had not about this time received an account of Almagro's having landed at St. Michael with such a reinforcement as would almost double the number of his followers.^f The arrival of this long-expected succour was not more agreeable to the Spaniards than alarming to the Inca. He saw the power of his enemies increase; and as he knew neither the source whence they derived their supplies, nor the means by which they were conveyed to Peru, he could not foresee to what a height the inundation that poured in upon his dominions might rise. While disquieted with such apprehensions, he learned that some Spaniards, in their way to Cuzco, had

1533.
Huascar
put to
death.

^d Xerez, 205.

^e See Note LXXIX.

^f Xerez, 204. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 1, 2.

visited his brother Huascar in the place where he kept him confined, and that the captive prince had represented to them the justice of his own cause, and as an inducement to espouse it, had promised them a quantity of treasure greatly beyond that which Atahualpa had engaged to pay for his ransom. If the Spaniards should listen to this proposal, Atahualpa perceived his own destruction to be inevitable; and suspecting that their insatiable thirst for gold would tempt them to lend a favourable ear to it, he determined to sacrifice his brother's life, that he might save his own; and his orders for this purpose were executed like all his other commands, with scrupulous punctuality.*

The Spaniards make a division of the spoil.

Meanwhile, Indians daily arrived at Caxamalca from different parts of the kingdom, loaded with treasure. A great part of the stipulated quantity was now amassed, and Atahualpa assured the Spaniards that the only thing which prevented the whole from being brought in, was the remoteness of the provinces where it was deposited. But such vast piles of gold presented continually to the view of needy soldiers, had so inflamed their avarice, that it was impossible any longer to restrain their impatience to obtain possession of this rich booty. Orders were given for melting down the whole, except some pieces of curious fabric, reserved as a present for the emperor. After setting apart the fifth due to the crown, and a hundred thousand pesos as a donative to the soldiers which arrived with Almagro, there remained one million five hundred and twenty-eight thousand five hundred pesos to Pizarro and his followers. The festival of July 25. St. James, the patron saint of Spain, was the day chosen for the partition of this enormous sum, and the manner of conducting it strongly marks the strange alliance of fanaticism with avarice, which I have more than once had occasion to point out as a striking feature

* Zarate, lib. ii. c. 6. Gomara Hist. c. 115. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 2.

in the character of the conquerors of the New World. Though assembled to divide the spoils of an innocent people, procured by deceit, extortion, and cruelty, the transaction began with a solemn invocation of the name of God,^b as if they could have expected the guidance of Heaven in distributing those wages of iniquity. In this division, above eight thousand pesos, at that time not inferior in effective value to as many pounds sterling in the present century, fell to the share of each horseman, and half that sum to each foot-soldier. Pizarro himself and his officers, received dividends in proportion to the dignity of their rank.

The effect
of it.

There is no example in history of such a sudden acquisition of wealth by military service, nor was ever a sum so great divided among so small a number of soldiers. Many of them having received a recompense for their services far beyond their most sanguine hopes, were so impatient to retire from fatigue and danger, in order to spend the remainder of their days in their native country in ease and opulence, that they demanded their discharge with clamorous importunity. Pizarro, sensible that from such men he could expect neither enterprise in action nor fortitude in suffering, and persuaded that wherever they went the display of their riches would allure adventures, less opulent, but more hardy, to his standard, granted their suit without reluctance, and permitted above sixty of them to accompany his brother Ferdinand, whom he sent to Spain with an account of his success, and the present destined for the emperor.^c

The Inca
demands
his liberty
in vain.

The Spaniards having divided among them the treasure amassed for the Inca's ransom, he insisted with them to fulfil their promise of setting him at liberty. But nothing was farther from Pizarro's thoughts. During his long service in the

Herrera, dec. 5. lib. ii. c. 3.

Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 4. Vega, p. 2. lib i. c. 38.

New World, he had imbibed those ideas and maxims of his fellow-soldiers, which led them to consider its inhabitants as an inferior race, neither worthy of the name, nor entitled to the rights, of men. In his compact with Atahualpa, he had no other object than to amuse his captive with such a prospect of recovering his liberty, as might induce him to lend all the aid of his authority towards collecting the wealth of his kingdom. Having now accomplished this, he no longer regarded his plighted faith; and at the very time when the credulous prince hoped to be replaced on his throne, he had secretly resolved to bereave him of life. Many circumstances seem to have concurred in prompting him to this action, the most criminal and atrocious that stains the Spanish name, amidst all the deeds of violence committed in carrying on the conquests of the New World.

He and
the Spa-
niards mu-
tually jea-
lous.

Though Pizarro had seized the Inca, in imitation of Cortes's conduct towards the Mexican monarch, he did not possess talents for carrying on the same artful plan of policy. Destitute of the temper and address requisite for gaining the confidence of his prisoner, he never reaped all the advantages which might have been derived from being master of his person and authority. Atahualpa was, indeed, a prince of greater abilities and discernment than Montezuma, and seems to have penetrated more thoroughly into the character and intentions of the Spaniards. Mutual suspicion and distrust accordingly took place between them. The strict attention with which it was necessary to guard a captive of such importance, greatly increased the fatigue of military duty. The utility of keeping him appeared inconsiderable; and Pizarro felt him as an encumbrance, from which he wished to be delivered.^k

Almagro
and his
followers
demand
his life.

Almagro and his followers had made a demand of an equal share in the Inca's ransom; and though Pizarro had bestowed upon the private men the large gratuity which I have mentioned, and endeavoured to soothe their leader by presents of great value, they still continued dissatisfied. They were apprehensive, that as long as Atahualpa remained a prisoner, Pizarro's soldiers would apply whatever treasure should be acquired, to make up what was wanting of the quantity stipulated for his ransom, and under that pretext exclude them from any part of it. They insisted eagerly on putting the Inca to death, that all the adventurers in Peru might thereafter be on an equal footing.

Motives
which in-
duced Pi-
zarro to
consent.

Pizarro himself began to be alarmed with accounts of forces assembling in the remote provinces of the empire, and suspected Atahualpa of having issued orders for that purpose. These fears and suspicions were artfully increased by Philipillo, one of the Indians, whom Pizarro had carried off from Tumbez in the year 1527, and whom he employed as an interpreter. The function which he performed admitting this man to familiar intercourse with the captive monarch, he presumed, notwithstanding the meanness of his birth, to raise his affections to a Coya, or descendant of the Sun, one of Atahualpa's wives; and seeing no prospect of gratifying that passion during the life of the monarch, he endeavoured to fill the ears of the Spaniards with such accounts of the Inca's secret designs and preparations, as might awaken their jealousy, and incite them to cut him off.

While Almagro and his followers openly demanded the life of the Inca, and Philipillo laboured to ruin him by private machinations, that unhappy prince

inadvertently contributed to hasten his own fate. During his confinement he had attached himself with peculiar affection to Ferdinand Pizarro and Hernando Soto; who, as they were persons of birth and education superior to the rough adventurers with whom they served, were accustomed to behave with more decency and attention to the captive monarch. Soothed with this respect from persons of such high rank, he delighted in their society. But in the presence of the governor he was always uneasy and overawed. This dread soon came to be mingled with contempt. Among all the European arts, what he admired most was that of reading and writing; and he long deliberated with himself, whether he should regard it as a natural or acquired talent. In order to determine this, he desired one of the soldiers, who guarded him, to write the name of God on the nail of his thumb. This he shewed successively to several Spaniards, asking its meaning; and to his amazement, they all, without hesitation, returned the same answer. At length Pizarro entered; and, on presenting it to him, he blushed, and with some confusion was obliged to acknowledge his ignorance. From that moment Atahualpa considered him as a mean person, less instructed than his own soldiers; and he had not address enough to conceal the sentiments with which this discovery inspired him. To be the object of a barbarian's scorn, not only mortified the pride of Pizarro, but excited such resentment in his breast, as added force to all the other considerations which prompted him to put the Inca to death."

His trial. But in order to give some colour of justice to this violent action, and that he himself might be exempted from standing singly responsible for the commission of it, Pizarro resolved to try the

Inca with all the formalities observed in the criminal courts of Spain. Pizarro himself, and Almagro, with two assistants, were appointed judges, with full power to acquit or to condemn; an attorney-general was named to carry on the prosecution in the king's name; counsellors were chosen to assist the prisoner in his defence; and clerks were ordained to record the proceedings of court. Before this strange tribunal, a charge was exhibited still more amazing. It consisted of various articles; that Atahualpa, though a bastard, had dispossessed the rightful owner of the throne, and usurped the regal power; that he had put his brother and lawful sovereign to death; that he was an idolater, and had not only permitted, but commanded the offering of human sacrifices; that he had a great number of concubines; that since his imprisonment he had wasted and embezzled the royal treasures, which now belonged of right to the conquerors; that he had incited his subjects to take arms against the Spaniards. On these heads of accusation, some of which are so ludicrous, others so absurd, that the effrontery of Pizarro, in making them the foundation of a serious procedure, is not less surprising than his injustice, did this strange court go on to try the sovereign of a great empire, over whom it had no jurisdiction. With respect to each of the articles, witnesses were examined; but as they delivered their evidence in their native tongue, Philippillo had it in his power to give their words whatever turn best suited his malevolent intentions. To judges predetermined in their opinion, this evidence appeared sufficient. They pronounced Atahualpa guilty, and condemned him to be burnt alive. He is, too, condemned. Friar Valverde prostituted the authority of his sacred function to confirm this sentence, and by his signature warranted it to be just. Astonished

at his fate, Atahualpa endeavoured to avert it by tears, by promises, and by entreaties, that he might be sent to Spain, where a monarch would be the arbiter of his lot. But pity never touched the unfeeling heart of Pizarro. He ordered him to be led instantly to execution; and, what added to the bitterness of his last moments, the same monk who had just ratified his doom, offered to console, and attempted to convert him. The most powerful argument Valverde employed to prevail with him to embrace the Christian faith, was a promise of mitigation in his punishment. The dread of a cruel death extorted from the trembling victim a desire of receiving baptism. The ceremony was performed; and Atahualpa, instead of being burnt, was strangled at the stake.^a

Several
Spaniards
protest
against it.

Happily for the credit of the Spanish nation, even among the profligate adventurers which it sent forth to conquer and desolate the New World, there were persons who retained some tincture of the Castilian generosity and honour. Though, before the trial of Atahualpa, Ferdinand Pizarro had set out for Spain, and Soto was sent on a separate command at a distance from Caxamalca, this odious transaction was not carried on without censure and opposition. Several officers, and among those some of the greatest reputation and most respectable families in the service, not only remonstrated, but protested against this measure of their general, as disgraceful to their country, as repugnant to every maxim of equity, as a violation of public faith, and a usurpation of jurisdiction over an independent monarch, to which they had no title. But their laudable endeavours were vain. Numbers, and the opinion of such as held every thing to be lawful

^a Zarate, lib. ii. c. 7. Xerez, p. 233. Vega, p. 11, lib. I. c. 36, 37. Gomara Hist. c. 117. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iii. c. 4.

which they deemed advantageous, prevailed. History, however, records even the unsuccessful exertions of virtue with applause; and the Spanish writers, in relating events where the valour of their nation is more conspicuous than its humanity, have not failed to preserve the names of those who made this laudable effort to save their country from the infamy of having perpetrated such a crime.*

Dissolu-
tion of go-
vernment
and order
in Peru.

On the death of Atahualpa, Pizarro invested one of his sons with the ensigns of royalty, hoping that a young man without experience might prove a more passive instrument in his hands than an ambitious monarch, who had been accustomed to independent command. The people of Cuzco, and the adjacent country, acknowledged Manco Capac, a brother of Huascar, as Inca.^p But neither possessed the authority which belonged to a sovereign of Peru. The violent convulsions into which the empire had been thrown, first by the civil war between the two brothers, and then by the invasion of the Spaniards, had not only deranged the order of the Peruvian government, but almost dissolved its frame. When they beheld their monarch a captive in the power of strangers, and at last suffering an ignominious death, the people in several provinces, as if they had been set free from every restraint of law and decency, broke out into the most licentious excesses.^q So many descendants of the Sun, after being treated with the utmost indignity, had been cut off by Atahualpa, that not only their influence in the state diminished with their number, but the accustomed reverence for that sacred race sensibly decreased. In consequence of this state of things, ambitious men in different parts of the empire aspired to independent authority, and

* Vega, p. 11. ad. l. c. 57. Xerez, i. 235. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 5.

^p Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 7.

^q Herrera, dec. 5. lib. ii. c. 12. lib. iii. c. 5.

usurped jurisdiction to which they had no title. The general who commanded for Atahualpa in Quito, seized the brother and children of his master, put them to a cruel death, and disclaiming any connexion with either Inca, endeavoured to establish a separate kingdom for himself.*

Pizarro
advances
to Cuzco.

The Spaniards, with pleasure, beheld the spirit of discord diffusing itself, and the vigour of government relaxing among the Peruvians. They considered those disorders as symptoms of a state hastening towards its dissolution. Pizarro no longer hesitated to advance towards Cuzco, and he had received such considerable reinforcements, that he could venture, with little danger, to penetrate so far into the interior part of the country. The account of the wealth acquired at Caxamalca operated as he had foreseen. No sooner did his brother Ferdinand, with the officers and soldiers to whom he had given their discharge after the partition of the Inca's ransom, arrive at Panama, and display their riches in the view of their astonished countrymen, than fame spread the account with such exaggeration through all the Spanish settlements on the South sea, that the governors of Guatimala, Panama, and Nicaragua, could hardly restrain the people under their jurisdiction, from abandoning their possessions, and crowding to that inexhaustible source of wealth which seemed to be opened in Peru. In spite of every check and regulation, such numbers resorted thither, that Pizarro began his march at the head of five hundred men, after leaving a considerable garrison in St. Michael, under the command of Benalcazar. The Peruvians had assembled some large bodies of troops to oppose his progress. Several fierce encounters happened. But they terminated like all the actions

* Zarate, lib. ii. c. 8. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 3, 4.

Gomara Hist. c. 125. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 1. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iii. c. 5.

in America; a few Spaniards were killed or wounded; the natives were put to flight with incredible slaughter. At length Pizarro forced his way to Cuzco, and took quiet possession of that capital. The riches found there, even after all that the natives had carried off and concealed, either from a superstitious veneration for the ornaments of their temples, or out of hatred to their rapacious conquerors, exceed in value what had been received as Atahualpa's ransom. But as the Spaniards were now accustomed to the wealth of the country, and it came to be parcelled out among a great number of adventurers, this dividend did not excite the same surprise, either from novelty, or the largeness of the sum that fell to the share of each individual.[†]

During the march to Cuzco, that son of Atahualpa whom Pizarro treated as Inca, died; and as the Spaniards substituted no person in his place, the title of Manco Capac seems to have been universally recognised.[‡]

Quito con-
quered by
Benal-
cazar.

While his fellow-soldiers were thus employed, Benalcazar, governor of St. Michael, an able and enterprising officer, was ashamed of remaining inactive, and impatient to have his name distinguished among the discoverers and conquerors of the New World. The seasonable arrival of a fresh body of recruits from Panama and Nicaragua, put it in his power to gratify this passion. Leaving a sufficient force to protect the infant settlement intrusted to his care, he placed himself at the head of the rest and set out to attempt the reduction of Quito, where, according to the report of the natives, Atahualpa had left the greatest part of his treasure. Notwithstanding the distance of that city from St. Michael, the difficulty of marching through a mountainous country covered with woods, and the frequent

[†] See Note LXXX.

[‡] Herrera, dec. 5. lib. v. c. 2.

and fierce attacks of the best troops in Peru, commanded by a skilful leader, the valour, good conduct, and perseverance of Benalcazar surmounted every obstacle, and he entered Quito with his victorious troops. But they met with a cruel mortification there. The natives, now acquainted to their sorrow with the predominant passion of their invaders, and knowing how to disappoint it, had carried off all those treasures, the prospect of which had prompted them to undertake this arduous expedition, and had supported them under all the dangers and hardships wherewith they had to struggle in carrying it on.*

Alvarado's expedition. Benalcazar was not the only Spanish leader who attacked the kingdom of Quito. The fame of its riches attracted a more powerful enemy. **Pedro de Alvarado**, who had distinguished himself so eminently in the conquest of Mexico, having obtained the government of Guatimala as a recompense for his valour, soon became disgusted with a life of uniform tranquillity, and longed to be again engaged in the bustle of military service. The glory and wealth acquired by the conquerors of Peru heightened this passion, and gave it a determined direction. Believing, or pretending to believe, that the kingdom of Quito did not lie within the limits of the province allotted to Pizarro, he resolved to invade it. The high reputation of the commander allured volunteers from every quarter. He embarked with five hundred men, of whom above two hundred were of such distinction as to serve on horseback. He landed at Puerto Viejo, and without sufficient knowledge of the country, or proper guides to conduct him, attempted to march directly to Quito, by following the course of the river Guayquil, and crossing the ridge of the Andes towards its head. But in this route, one of the most

* Zarate, lib. iii. c. 9. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 9. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 11, 12. lib. v. c. 2, 3. lib. vi. c. 3.

impracticable in all America, his troops endured such fatigue in forcing their way through forests and marshes on the low grounds, and suffered so much from excessive cold when they began to ascend the mountains, that before they reached the plain of Quito, a fifth part of the men and half their horses died, and the rest were so much dispirited and worn out, as to be almost unfit for service.* There they met with a body not of Indians but of Spaniards, drawn in hostile array against them. Pizarro having received an account of Alvarado's armament, had detached Almagro with some troops to oppose this formidable invader of his jurisdiction; and these were joined by Benalcazar and his victorious party. Alvarado, though surprised at the sight of enemies whom he did not expect, advanced boldly to the charge. But, by the interposition of some moderate men in each party, an amicable accommodation took place; and the fatal period, when Spaniards suspended their conquests to imbrue their hands in the blood of their countrymen, was postponed a few years. Alvarado engaged to return to his government, upon Almagro's paying him a hundred thousand pesos to defray the expense of his armament. Most of the followers remained in the country; and an expedition, which threatened Pizarro and his colony with ruin, contributed to augment its strength.†

1534.
Honours
conferred
on Pizarro
and Almagro.

By this time Ferdinand Pizarro had landed in Spain. The immense quantities of gold and silver which he imported,‡ filled the kingdom with no less astonishment than they had excited in Panama and the adjacent provinces. Pizarro was received by the emperor with the attention

* See Note LXXXI.

† Zarate, lib. ii. c. 10—13. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 1, 2. 9, &c. Gomara Hist. c. 126. &c. Remesal Hist. Guatimal. lib. iii. c. 6. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. vi. c. 1, 2. 7, 8.

‡ See Note LXXXII.

due to the bearer of a present so rich, as to exceed any idea which the Spaniards had formed concerning the value of their acquisitions in America, even after they had been ten years masters of Mexico. In recompense of his brother's services, his authority was confirmed with new powers and privileges, and the addition of seventy leagues, extending along the coast, to the southward of the territory granted in his former patent. Almagro received the honours which he had so long desired. The title of adelantado, or governor, was conferred upon him, with jurisdiction over two hundred leagues of country, stretching beyond the southern limits of the province allotted to Pizarro. Ferdinand himself did not go unrewarded. He was admitted into the military order of St. Jago, a distinction always acceptable to a Spanish gentleman, and soon set out on his return to Peru, accompanied by many persons of higher rank than had yet served in that country.*

Beginning of dissen-
sions be-
tween Pi-
zarro and
Almagro. Some account of his negotiations reached Peru before he arrived there himself. Almagro no sooner learned that he had obtained the royal grant of an independent government, than pretending that Cuzco, the imperial residence of the Incas, lay within its boundaries, he attempted to render himself master of that important station. Juan and Gonzalez Pizarro prepared to oppose him. Each of the contending parties was supported by powerful adherents, and the dispute was on the point of being terminated by the sword, when Francis Pizarro arrived in the capital. The reconciliation between him and Almagro had never been cordial. The treachery of Pizarro in engrossing to himself all the honours and emoluments, which ought to have been divided with his associate, was always present in both their thoughts. The former, con-

* Zarate, lib. iii. c. 3. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 19. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. vi. c. 13.

scious of his own perfidy, did not expect forgiveness ; the latter, feeling that he had been deceived, was impatient to be avenged ; and though avarice and ambition had induced them not only to dissemble their sentiments, but even to act in concert while in pursuit of wealth and power, no sooner did they obtain possession of these, than the same passions which had formed this temporary union, gave rise to jealousy and discord. To each of them was attached a small band of interested dependants, who, with the malicious art peculiar to such men, heightened their suspicions, and magnified every appearance of offence. But with all those seeds of enmity in their minds, and thus assiduously cherished, each was so thoroughly acquainted with the abilities and courage of his rival, that they equally dreaded the consequences of an open rupture. The fortunate arrival of Pizarro at Cuzco, and the address mingled with firmness which he manifested in his expostulations with Almagro and his partisans, averted that evil for the present. A new reconciliation took place ; the chief article of which was, that Almagro should attempt the conquest of Chili ; and if he did not find in that province an establishment adequate to his merit and expectations, Pizarro, by way of indemnification, should yield up to him a part of Peru. This new agreement, though confirmed with the same sacred solemnities as their first contract, was observed with as little fidelity.^b

June 12.

Regulations of Pizarro.

Soon after he concluded this important transaction, Pizarro marched back to the countries on the sea-coast ; and as he now enjoyed an interval of tranquillity undisturbed by any enemy, either Spanish or Indian, he applied himself with that persevering ardour, which distinguishes his character, to in-

^b Zarate, lib. ii. c. 13. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 19. Benzo, lib. iii. c. 6. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. vii. c. 8.

introduce a form of regular government into the extensive provinces subject to his authority. Though ill qualified by his education to enter into any disquisition concerning the principles of civil policy, and little accustomed by his former habits of life to attend to its arrangements, his natural sagacity supplied the want both of science and experience. He distributed the country into various districts; he appointed proper magistrates to preside in each; and established regulations concerning the administration of justice, the collection of the royal revenue, the working of the mines, and the treatment of the Indians, extremely simple, but well calculated to promote the public prosperity. But, though, for the present, he adapted his plan to the infant state of his colony, his aspiring mind looked forward to its future grandeur. He considered himself as laying the foundation of a great empire, and deliberated long, and with much solicitude, in what place he should fix the seat of government. Cuzco, the imperial city of the Incas, was situated in a corner of the empire, above four hundred miles from the sea, and much farther from Quito, a province of whose value he had formed a high idea. No other settlement of the Peruvians was so considerable as to merit the name of a town, or to allure the Spaniards to fix their residence in it. But in marching through the country, Pizarro had been struck with the beauty and fertility of the valley of Rimac, one of the most extensive and best cultivated in Peru. There, on the banks of a small river, of the same name with the vale which it waters and enriches, at the distance of six miles from Callao, the most commodious harbour in the Pacific ocean, he founded a city which he destined to be the capital of his government. He gave it the name of Ciudad de los Reyes, either from the circumstance of having laid the first stone, at that season when the church celebrates the festival

Founda-
tion of
Lima.

1535.
January
18th.

of the Three Kings, or, as is more probable, in honour of Juana and Charles, the joint sovereigns of Castile. This name it still retains among the Spaniards in all legal and formal deeds; but it is better known to foreigners by that of *Lima*, a corruption of the ancient appellation of the valley in which it is situated. Under his inspection, the buildings advanced with such rapidity, that it soon assumed the form of a city, which, by a magnificent palace that he erected for himself, and by the stately houses built by several of his officers, gave, even in its infancy, some indication of its subsequent grandeur.^c

Almagro
invades
Chili.

In consequence of what had been agreed with Pizarro, Almagro began his march towards Chili; and as he possessed in an eminent degree the virtues most admired by soldiers, boundless liberality and fearless courage, his standard was followed by five hundred and seventy men, the greatest body of Europeans that had hitherto been assembled in Peru. From impatience to finish the expedition, or from that contempt of hardship and danger acquired by all the Spaniards who had served long in America, Almagro, instead of advancing along the level country on the coast, chose to march across the mountains by a route that was shorter indeed, but almost impracticable. In this attempt his troops were exposed to every calamity which men can suffer, from fatigue, from famine, and from the rigour of the climate in those elevated regions of the torrid zone, where the degree of cold is hardly inferior to what is felt within the polar circle. Many of them perished; and the survivors, when they descended into the fertile plains of Chili, had new difficulties to encounter. They found there a race of men very different from the people of Peru, intrepid, hardy, independent, and in their bodily constitution, as well as

^c Herrera, dec. 5. lib. vi. c. 12. lib. vii. c. 13. Calaucho, Coronica, lib. i. c. 37. Barneuvo, Lima fundata, ii. 291.

vigour of spirit, nearly resembling the warlike tribes in North America. Though filled with wonder at the first appearance of the Spaniards, and still more astonished at the operations of their cavalry, and the effects of their fire-arms, the Chileses soon recovered so far from their surprise, as not only to defend themselves with obstinacy, but to attack their new enemies with more determined fierceness than any American nation had hitherto discovered. The Spaniards, however, continued to penetrate into the country, and collected some considerable quantities of gold; but were so far from thinking of making any settlement amidst such formidable neighbours, that, in spite of all the experience and valour of their leader, the final issue of the expedition still remained extremely dubious, when they were recalled from it by an unexpected revolution at Peru.^d The causes of this important event I shall endeavour to trace to their source.

An insur-
rection of
the Peru-
vians.

So many adventurers had flocked to Peru from every Spanish colony in America, and all with such high expectations of accumulating independent fortunes at once, that, to men possessed with notions so extravagant, any mention of acquiring wealth gradually, and by schemes of patient industry, would have been not only a disappointment, but an insult. In order to find occupation for men who could not with safety be allowed to remain inactive, Pizarro encouraged some of the most distinguished officers who had lately joined him, to invade different provinces of the empire, which the Spaniards had not hitherto visited. Several large bodies were formed for this purpose; and about the time that Almagro set out for Chili, they marched into remote districts of the country.

Its rise, No sooner did Manco Capac, the Inca, observe the inconsiderate security of the Spaniards in

^d Zarate, lib. iii. c. 1. Gomara Hist. c. 131. Vega, p. 2. lib. ii. c. 20. Ovalle Hist. de Chile, lib. iv. c. 15, &c. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. vi. c. 9. lib. x. c. 1, &c.

thus dispersing their troops, and that only a handful of soldiers remained in Cuzco, under Juan and Gonzalez Pizarro, than he thought that the happy period was at length come for vindicating his own rights, for avenging the wrongs of his country, and extirpating its oppressors. Though strictly watched by the Spaniards, who allowed him to reside in the palace of his ancestors at Cuzco, he found means of communicating his scheme to the persons who were to be intrusted with the execution of it. Among people accustomed to revere their sovereign as a divinity, every hint of his will carries the authority of a command; and they themselves were now convinced, by the daily increase in the number of their invaders, that the fond hopes which they had long entertained of their voluntary departure were altogether vain. All perceived that a vigorous effort of the whole nation was requisite to expel them, and the preparations for it were carried on with the secrecy and silence peculiar to Americans.

And pro-
gress.
1536.

After some unsuccessful attempts of the Inca to make his escape, Ferdinand Pizarro happened to arrive at that time in Cuzco, he obtained permission from him to attend a great festival which was to be celebrated a few leagues from the capital. Under pretext of that solemnity, the great men of the empire were assembled. As soon as the Inca joined them, the standard of war was erected; and in a short time all the fighting men from the confines of Quito to the frontier of Chili were in arms. Many Spaniards, living securely on the settlements allotted them, were massacred. Several detachments, as they marched carelessly through a country which seemed to be tamely submissive to their dominion, were cut off to a man. An army amounting (if we may believe the Spanish writers) to two hundred thousand men, attacked Cuzco, which the three brothers endeavoured to defend with only one hundred and seventy Spaniards. An-

other formidable body invested Lima, and kept the governor closely shut up. There was no longer any communication between the two cities; the numerous forces of the Peruvians spreading over the country, intercepted every messenger; and as the parties in Cuzco and Lima were equally unacquainted with the fate of their countrymen, each boded the worst concerning the other, and imagined that they themselves were the only persons who had survived the general extinction of the Spanish name in Peru."

Siege of
Cuzco.

It was at Cuzco, where the Inca commanded in person, that the Peruvians made their chief effort. During nine months they carried on the siege with incessant ardour, and in various forms; and though they displayed not the same undaunted ferocity as the Mexican warriors, they conducted some of their operations in a manner which discovered greater sagacity, and a genius more susceptible of improvement in the military art. They not only observed the advantages which the Spaniards derived from their discipline and their weapons, but they endeavoured to imitate the former, and turned the latter against them. They armed a considerable body of their bravest warriors with the swords, the spears, and bucklers, which they had taken from the Spanish soldiers whom they had cut off in different parts of the country. These they endeavoured to marshal in that regular compact order, to which experience had taught them that the Spaniards were indebted for their irresistible force in action. Some appeared in the field with Spanish muskets, and had acquired skill and resolution enough to use them. A few of the boldest, among whom was the Inca himself, were mounted on the horses which they had taken, and advanced briskly to the charge like Spanish cavaliers, with their lances in the rest. It was more by their numbers, however,

* Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 28. Zarate, lib. iii. c. 3. Cieca de Leon, c. 82. Gomara Hist. c. 135. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 5.

than by those imperfect essays to imitate European arts and to employ European arms, that the Peruvians annoyed the Spaniards.^f In spite of the valour, heightened by despair, with which the three brothers defended Cuzco, Manco Capac recovered possession of one half of his capital; and in their various efforts to drive him out of it, the Spaniards lost Juan Pizarro, the best beloved of all the brothers, together with some other persons of note. Worn out with the fatigue of incessant duty, distressed with want of provisions, and despairing of being able any longer to resist an enemy whose numbers daily increased, the soldiers became impatient to abandon Cuzco, in hopes either of joining their countrymen, if any of them yet survived, or of forcing their way to the sea, and finding some means of escaping from a country which had been so fatal to the Spanish name.^g While they were brooding over those desponding thoughts, which their officers laboured in vain to dispel, Almagro appeared suddenly in the neighbourhood of Cuzco.

Arrival of
Almagro,
and mo-
tives of his
conduct.

The accounts transmitted to Almagro concerning the general insurrection of the Peruvians, were such as would have induced him without hesitation, to relinquish the conquest of Chili, and hasten to the aid of his countrymen. But in this resolution he was confirmed by a motive less generous, but more interesting. By the same messenger who brought him intelligence of the Inca's revolt, he received the royal patent creating him governor of Chili, and defining the limits of his jurisdiction. Upon considering the tenor of it, he deemed it manifest beyond contradiction, that Cuzco lay within the boundaries of his government, and he was equally solicitous to prevent the Peruvians from recovering possession of their capital, and to wrest it out of the hands of the Pizarros. From impatience to accomplish both,

^f See Note LXXXIII.

^g Herrera, dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 4.

he ventured to return by a new route ; and in marching through the sandy plains on the coast, he suffered from heat and drought, calamities of a new species, hardly inferior to those in which he had been involved by cold and famine on the summits of the Andes.

1537.
His opera-
tions. His arrival at Cuzco was in a critical mo-
ment. The Spaniards and Peruvians fixed

their eyes upon him with equal solicitude. The former, as he did not study to conceal his pretensions, were at a loss whether to welcome him as a deliverer, or to take precautions against him as an enemy. The latter, knowing the points in contest between him and his countrymen, flattered themselves that they had more to hope than to dread from his operations. Almagro himself, unacquainted with the detail of the events which had happened in his absence, and solicitous to learn the precise posture of affairs, advanced towards the capital slowly, and with great circumspection. Various negotiations with both parties were set on foot. The Inca conducted them on his part with much address. At first he endeavoured to gain the friendship of Almagro ; and after many fruitless overtures, despairing of any cordial union with a Spaniard, he attacked him by surprise with a numerous body of chosen troops. But the Spanish discipline and valour maintained their wonted superiority. The Peruvians were repulsed with such slaughter, that a great part of their army dispersed, and Almagro proceeded to the gates of Cuzco without interruption.

Takes pos-
session of
Cuzco. The Pizarros, as they had no longer to make head against the Peruvians, directed all their attention towards their new enemy, and took measures to obstruct his entry into the capital. Prudence, however, restrained both parties for some time, from turning their arms against one another, while surrounded by common enemies, who would rejoice in the

mutual slaughter. Different schemes of accommodation were proposed. Each endeavoured to deceive the other, or to corrupt his followers. The generous, open, affable temper of Almagro gained many adherents of the Pizarros, who were disgusted with their harsh domineering manners. Encouraged by this defection, he advanced towards the city by night, surprised the sentinels, or was admitted by them, and investing the house where the two brothers resided, compelled them, after an obstinate defence, to surrender at discretion. Almagro's claim of jurisdiction over Cuzco was universally acknowledged, and a form of administration established in his name.^b

Civil war and first success of Almagro, Two or three persons only were killed in this first act of civil hostility; but it was soon followed by scenes more bloody. Francis Pizarro having dispersed the Peruvians who had invested Lima, and received some considerable reinforcements from Hispaniola and Nicaragua, ordered five hundred men, under the command of Alonso de Alvarado, to march to Cuzco, in hopes of relieving his brothers, if they and their garrison were not already cut off by the Peruvians. This body, which at that period of the Spanish power in America, must be deemed a considerable force, advanced near to the capital before they knew that they had any enemy more formidable than Indians to encounter. It was with astonishment that they beheld their countrymen posted on the banks of the river Abancay to oppose their progress. Almagro, however, wished rather to gain than to conquer them, and by bribes and promises endeavoured to seduce their leader. The fidelity of Alvarado remained unshaken; but his talents for war were not equal to his virtue. Almagro amused him with various movements, of which he did not comprehend the mean-

^b Zarate, lib. iii. c. 4. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 29. 31. Gomara Hist. c. 134. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. ii. c. 1—5.

July 12. ing, while a large detachment of *chosen soldiers* passed the river by night, fell upon his camp by surprise, broke his troops before they had time to form, and took him prisoner, together with his principal officers.ⁱ

But does not improve his advantages. By the sudden rout of this body, the contest between the two rivals must have been decided, if Almagro had known as well how to improve as how to gain a victory. Rodrigo Orgognez, an officer of great abilities, who having served under the constable Bourbon, when he led the imperial army to Rome, had been accustomed to bold and decisive measures, advised him instantly to issue orders for putting to death Ferdinand and Gonzalo Pizarros, Alvarado, and a few other persons whom he could not hope to gain, and to march directly with his victorious troops to Lima, before the governor had time to prepare for his defence. But Almagro, though he discerned at once the utility of the counsel, and though he had courage to have carried it into execution, suffered himself to be influenced by sentiments unlike those of a soldier of fortune grown old in service, and by scruples which suited not the chief of a party who had drawn his sword in civil war. Feelings of humanity restrained him from shedding the blood of his opponents; and the dread of being deemed a rebel, deterred him from entering a province which the king had allotted to another. Though he knew that arms must terminate the dispute between him and Pizarro, and resolved not to shun that mode of decision, yet, with a timid delicacy preposterous at such a juncture, he was so solicitous that his rival should be considered as the aggressor, that he marched quietly back to Cuzco, to wait his approach.^k

ⁱ Zarate, lib. iii. c. 6. Gom. Hist. c. 138. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 32. 34. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. ii. c. 9.

^k Herrera, dec. 6. lib. ii. c. 10, 11.

Distress of Pizarro. Pizarro was still unacquainted with all the interesting events which had happened near Cuzco. Accounts of Almagro's return, of the loss of the capital, of the death of one brother, of the imprisonment of the other two, and of the defeat of Alvarado, were brought to him at once. Such a tide of misfortunes almost overwhelmed a spirit which had continued firm and erect under the rudest shocks of adversity. But the necessity of attending to his own safety, as well as the desire of revenge, preserved him from sinking under it. **His artful conduct.** He took measures for both with his wonted sagacity. As he had the command of the sea-coast, and expected considerable supplies both of men and military stores, it was no less his interest to gain time, and to avoid action, than it was that of Almagro to precipitate operations, and bring the contest to a speedy issue. He had recourse to arts which he had formerly practised with success; and Almagro was again weak enough to suffer himself to be amused with a prospect of terminating their differences by some amicable accommodation. By varying his overtures, and shifting his ground as often as it suited his purpose, sometimes seeming to yield to every thing which his rival could desire, and then retracting all that he had granted, Pizarro dexterously protracted the negotiation to such a length, that, though every day was precious to Almagro, several months elapsed without coming to any final agreement. While the attention of Almagro, and of the officers with whom he consulted, was occupied in detecting and eluding the fraudulent intentions of the governor, Gonzalo Pizarro and Alvarado found means to corrupt the soldiers to whose custody they were committed, and not only made their escape themselves, but persuaded sixty of the men who formerly guarded them to accompany their flight.¹ Fortune having thus delivered one of his brothers, the

¹ Zarate, lib. iii. c. 8. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. ii. c. 14.

governor scrupled not at one act of perfidy more to procure the release of the other. He proposed that every point in controversy between Almagro and himself should be submitted to the decision of their sovereign ; that until his award was known, each should retain undisturbed possession of whatever part of the country he now occupied ; that Ferdinand Pizarro should be set at liberty, and return instantly to Spain, together with the officers, whom Almagro purposed to send thither to represent the justice of his claims. Obvious as the design of Pizarro was in those propositions, and familiar as his artifices might now have been to his opponent, Almagro, with a credulity approaching to infatuation, relied on his sincerity, and concluded an agreement on these terms.^m

His pre-
parations
for war.

The moment that Ferdinand Pizarro recovered his liberty, the governor, no longer fettered in his operations by anxiety about his brother's life, threw off every disguise which his concern for it had obliged him to assume. The treaty was forgotten ; pacific and conciliating measures were no more mentioned ; it was in the field he openly declared, and not in the cabinet ; by arms, and not by negotiation ; that it must now be determined who should be master of Peru. The rapidity of his preparations suited such a decisive resolution. Seven hundred men were soon ready to march towards Cuzco. The command of these was given to his two brothers, in whom he could perfectly confide for the execution of his most violent schemes, as they were urged on, not only by the enmity flowing from the rivalry between their family and Almagro, but animated with the desire of vengeance, excited by recollection of their own recent disgrace and sufferings. After an unsuccessful attempt to cross the mountains in the direct road between Lima

^m Herrera, dec. 6. lib. iii. c. 9. Zarate, lib. iii. c. 9. Gomara Hist. c. 140. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 35.

and Cuzco, they marched towards the south along the coast as far as Nasca, and then turning to the left, penetrated through the defiles in that branch of the Andes which lay between them and the capital. Almagro, instead of hearkening to some of his officers, who advised him to attempt the defence of those difficult passes, waited the approach of the enemy in the plain of Cuzco. Two reasons seem to have induced him to take this resolution. His followers amounted hardly to five hundred, and he was afraid of weakening such a feeble body by sending any detachment towards the mountains. His cavalry far exceeded that of the adverse party, both in number and discipline, and it was only in an open country that he could avail himself of that advantage.

His army
marches
to Cuzco.

The Pizarros advanced without any obstruction, but what arose from the nature of the desert and horrid regions through which they marched. As soon as they reached the plain, both factions were equally impatient to bring this long protracted contest to an issue. Though countrymen and friends, the subjects of the same sovereign, and each with the royal standard displayed; and though they beheld the mountains that surrounded the plain in which they were drawn up, covered with a vast multitude of Indians, assembled to enjoy the spectacle of their mutual carnage, and prepared to attack whatever party remained master of the field; so fell and implacable was the rancour which had taken possession of every breast, that not one pacific counsel, not a single overture towards accommodation, proceeded from either side. Unfortunately for Almagro, he was so worn out with the fatigues of service, to which his advanced age was unequal, that, at this crisis of his fate, he could not exert his wonted activity; and he was obliged to commit the leading of his troops to Orgognez, who, though an officer of great merit, did not possess the

same ascendant either over the spirit or affections of the soldiers, as the chief whom they had long been accustomed to follow and revere.

April 26.
Almagro
defeated.

The conflict was fierce, and maintained by each party with equal courage. On the side of Almagro, were more veteran soldiers, and a larger proportion of cavalry; but these were counterbalanced by Pizarro's superiority in numbers, and by two companies of well-disciplined musketeers, which, on receiving an account of the insurrection of the Indians, the emperor had sent from Spain. As the use of fire-arms was not frequent among the adventurers in America,* hastily equipped for service, at their own expense, this small band of soldiers regularly trained and armed, was a novelty in Peru, and decided the fate of the day. Wherever it advanced, the weight of a heavy and well-sustained fire bore down horse and foot before it; and Orgóñez, while he endeavoured to rally and animate his troops, having received a dangerous wound, the route became general. The barbarity of the conquerors stained the glory which they acquired by this complete victory. The violence of civil rage hurried on some to slaughter their countrymen with indiscriminate cruelty; the meanness of private revenge instigated others to single out individuals as the objects of their vengeance. Orgóñez and several officers of distinction were massacred in cold blood; above a hundred and forty soldiers fell in the field; a large proportion, where the number of combatants were few, and the heat of the contest soon over. Almagro, though so feeble that he could not bear the motion of a horse, had insisted on being carried in a litter to an eminence which overlooked the field of battle. From thence, in the utmost agitation of mind, he viewed the various movements of both parties, and at last beheld the total defeat of his own troops, with all the passionate

* Herrera, dec. 6; lib. iii. c. 8.

indignation of a veteran leader long accustomed to victory. He endeavoured to save himself by And taken. flight, but was taken prisoner, and guarded with the strictest vigilance.^p

The Indians, instead of executing the resolution which they had formed, retired quietly after the battle was over; and in the history of the New World, there is not a more striking instance of the wonderful ascendant which the Spaniards had acquired over its inhabitants, than that, after seeing one of the contending parties ruined and dispersed, and the other weakened and fatigued, they had not courage to fall upon their enemies, when fortune presented an opportunity of attacking them with such advantage.^q

New expeditions. Cuzco was pillaged by the victorious troops, who found there a considerable booty, consisting partly of the gleanings of the Indian treasures, and partly of the wealth amassed by their antagonists from the spoils of Peru and Chili. But so far did this, and whatever the bounty of their leader could add to it, fall below the high ideas of the recompense which they conceived to be due to their merit, that Ferdinand Pizarro, unable to gratify such extravagant expectations, had recourse to the same expedient which his brother had employed on a similar occasion, and endeavoured to find occupation for this turbulent assuming spirit, in order to prevent it from breaking out into open mutiny. With this view, he encouraged his most active officers to attempt the discovery and reduction of various provinces which had not hitherto submitted to the Spaniards. To every standard erected by the leaders who undertook any of those new expeditions, volunteers resorted with the ardour and hope peculiar to the age. Several of Almagro's soldiers joined them, and thus Pizarro had the satisfaction of being delivered both

^p Zarate, lib. iii. c. 11, 12. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 36—38. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. iii. c. 10—12. lib. iv. c. 1—6.

^q Zarate, lib. iii. c. 11. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 36.

from the importunity of his discontented friends, and the dread of his ancient enemies.'

Almagro
tried,

Almagro himself remained for several months in custody, under all the anguish of suspense. For although his doom was determined by the Pizarros from the moment that he fell into their hands, prudence constrained them to defer gratifying their vengeance, until the soldiers who had served under him, as well as several of their own followers in whom they could not perfectly confide, had left Cuzco. As soon as they set out upon their different expeditions, Almagro was impeached of treason, formally tried, and condemned, demned to die. The sentence astonished him; and though he had often braved death with undaunted spirit in the field, its approach under this ignominious form appalled him so much, that he had recourse to abject supplications, unworthy of his former fame. He besought the Pizarros to remember the ancient friendship between their brother and him, and how much he had contributed to the prosperity of their family; he reminded them of the humanity with which, in opposition to the repeated remonstrances of his own most attached friends, he had spared their lives when he had them in his power; he conjured them to pity his age and infirmities, and to suffer him to pass the wretched remainder of his days in bewailing his crimes, and in making his peace with Heaven. The entreaties, says a Spanish historian, of a man so much beloved, touched many an unfeeling heart, and drew tears from many a stern eye. But the brothers remained inflexible. As soon as Almagro knew his fate to be inevitable, he met it with the dignity and fortitude of a veteran. He was strangled in prison, and afterward publicly beheaded. He suffered in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and left one son by an Indian woman of Panama, whom, though at that time a prisoner in Lima,

And put
to death.

he named as successor to his government, pursuant to a power which the emperor had granted him.*

1539.

Deliberations of the court of Spain concerning the state of Peru.

As, during the civil dissensions in Peru, all intercourse with Spain was suspended, the detail of the extraordinary transactions there did not soon reach the court. Unfortunately for the victorious faction, the first intelligence was

brought thither by some of Almagro's officers, who left the country upon the ruin of their cause; and they related what had happened, with every circumstance unfavourable to Pizarro and his brothers. Their ambition, their breach of the most solemn engagements, their violence and cruelty, were painted with all the malignity and exaggeration of party hatred. Ferdinand Pizarro, who arrived soon after, and appeared in court with extraordinary splendour, endeavoured to efface the impression which their accusations had made, and to justify his brother and himself by representing Almagro as the aggressor. The emperor and his ministers, though they could not pronounce which of the contending factions was most criminal, clearly discerned the fatal tendency of their dissensions. It was obvious, that while the leaders, intrusted with the conduct of two infant colonies, employed the arms which should have been turned against the common enemy, in destroying one another, all attention to the public good must cease, and there was reason to dread that the Indians might improve the advantage which the disunion of the Spaniards presented to them, and extirpate both the victors and vanquished. But the evil was more apparent than the remedy. Where the information which had been received was so defective and suspicious, and the scene of action so remote, it was almost impossible to chalk out the line of conduct that ought to be followed, and before any plan that should be ap-

* Zarate, lib. iii. c. 12. Gomara Hist. c. 141. Vega, p. 11. lib. ii. c. 39. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. iv. c. 9. lib. v. c. 1.

proved of in Spain could be carried into execution, the situation of the parties, and the circumstances of affairs, might alter so entirely as to render its effects extremely pernicious.

Nothing therefore remained but to send a person to Peru, vested with extensive and discretionary power, who, after viewing deliberately the posture of affairs with his own eyes, and inquiring upon the spot into the conduct of the different leaders, should be authorized to establish the government in that form which he deemed most conducive to the interest of the parent state, and the welfare of the colony. The man selected for this important charge was Christoval Vaca de Castro, a judge in the court of royal audience at Valladolid; and his abilities, integrity, and firmness, justified the choice. His instructions, though ample, were not such as to fetter him in his operations. According to the different aspect of affairs, he had power to take upon him different characters. If he found the governor still alive, he was to assume only the title of judge, to maintain the appearance of acting in concert with him, and to guard against giving any just cause of offence to a man who had merited so highly of his country. But if Pizarro were dead, he was intrusted with a commission that he might then produce, by which he was appointed his successor in the government of Peru. This attention to Pizarro, however, seems to have flowed rather from dread of his power, than from any approbation of his measures; for at the very time that the court seemed so solicitous not to irritate him, his brother Ferdinand was arrested at Madrid, and confined to a prison, where he remained above twenty years.

¹ Gomara Hist. c. 142. Vega, p. 41. lib. ii. c. 40. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. viii. c. 10, 11. lib. x. c. 1.

1540.

Pizarro divides Peru among his followers.

While Vaca de Castro was preparing for his voyage, events of great moment happened in Peru. The governor, considering himself, upon the death of Almagro, as the unrivalled possessor of that vast empire, proceeded to parcel out its territories among the conquerors; and had this division been made with any degree of impartiality, the extent of country which he had to bestow, was sufficient to have gratified his friends, and to have gained his enemies. But Pizarro conducted this transaction, not with the equity and candour of a judge attentive to discover and to reward merit, but with the illiberal spirit of a party-leader. Large districts, in parts of the country most cultivated and populous, were set apart as his own property, or granted to his brothers, his adherents and favourites. To others, lots less valuable and inviting were assigned. The followers of Almagro, amongst whom were many of the original adventurers to whose valour and perseverance Pizarro was indebted for his success, were totally excluded from any portion in those lands, towards the acquisition of which they had contributed so largely. As the vanity of every individual set an immoderate value upon his own services, and the idea of each concerning the recompense due to them rose gradually to a more exorbitant height in proportion as their conquests extended, all who were disappointed in their expectations exclaimed loudly against the rapaciousness and partiality of the governor. The partisans of Almagro murmured in secret, and meditated revenge."

Progress of the Spanish arms.

Rapid as the progress of the Spaniards in South America had been since Pizarro landed in Peru, their avidity of dominion was not yet satisfied. The officers to whom Ferdinand Pizarro gave the command of different detachments,

penetrated into several new provinces, and though some of them were exposed to great hardships in the cold and barren regions of the Andes, and others suffered distress not inferior amidst the woods and marshes of the plains, they made discoveries and conquests which not only extended their knowledge of the country, but added considerably to the territories of Spain in the New World. Pedro de Valdivia reassumed Almagro's scheme of invading Chili, and, notwithstanding the fortitude of the natives in defending their possessions, made such progress in the conquest of the country, that he founded the city of St. Jago, and gave a beginning to the establishment of the Spanish dominion in that province.*

Remark-
able expe-
dition of
Gonzalo
Pizarro.

But of all the enterprises undertaken about this period, that of Gonzalo Pizarro was the most remarkable. The governor, who seems to have resolved that no person in Peru should possess any station of distinguished eminence or authority but those of his own family, had deprived Benalcazar, the conqueror of Quito, of his command in that kingdom, and appointed his brother Gonzalo to take the government of it. He instructed him to attempt the discovery and conquest of the country to the east of the Andes, which, according to the information of the Indians, abounded with cinnamon and other valuable spices. Gonzalo, not inferior to any of his brothers in courage, and no less ambitious of acquiring distinction, eagerly engaged in this difficult service. He set out from Quito at the head of three hundred and forty soldiers, near one half of whom were horsemen; with four thousand Indians to carry their provisions. In forcing their way through the defiles, or over the ridges of the Andes, excess of cold and fatigue, to neither of which they were accustomed, proved fatal to the

* Zarate, lib. iii. c. 13. Ovalle, lib. ii. c. 1, &c.

greater part of their wretched attendants. The Spaniards, though more robust, and inured to a variety of climates, suffered considerably, and lost some men; but when they descended into the low country, their distress increased. During two months it rained incessantly, without any interval of fair weather long enough to dry their clothes.* The immense plains upon which they were now entering, either altogether without inhabitants, or occupied by the rudest and least industrious tribes in the New World, yielded little subsistence. They could not advance a step but as they cut a road through woods, or made it through marshes. Such incessant toil, and continual scarcity of food, seem more than sufficient to have exhausted and dispirited any troops. But the fortitude and perseverance of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century were insuperable. Allured by frequent but false accounts of rich countries before them, they persisted in struggling on, until they reached the banks of the Coca or Napo, one of the large rivers whose waters pour into the Maragnon, and contribute to its grandeur. There, with infinite labour, they built a bark, which they expected would prove of great utility, in conveying them over rivers, in procuring provisions, and in exploring the country. This was manned with fifty soldiers, under the command of Francis Orellana, the officer next in rank to Pizarro. The stream carried them down with such rapidity, that they were soon far a-head of their countrymen, who followed slowly and with difficulty by land.

Deserted
by Orel-
lana.

At this distance from his commander, Orellana, a young man of an aspiring mind, began to fancy himself independent, and transported with the predominant passion of the age, he formed the scheme of distinguishing himself as a discoverer,

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 2.

by following the course of the Maragnon, until it joined the ocean, and by surveying the vast regions through which it flows. This scheme of Orellana's was as bold as it was treacherous. For, if he be chargeable with the guilt of having violated his duty to his commander, and with having abandoned his fellow-soldiers in a pathless desert, where they had hardly any hopes of success, or even of safety, but what were founded on the service which they expected from the bark; his crime is, in some measure, balanced by the glory of having ventured upon a navigation of near two thousand leagues, through unknown nations, in a vessel hastily constructed, with green* timber, and by very unskilful hands, without provisions, without a compass, or a pilot. But his courage and alacrity supplied every defect.

Sails down
the Ma-
ragnon. Committing himself fearlessly to the guidance of the stream, the Napo bore him along to the south, until he reached the great channel of the Maragnon. Turning with it towards the coast, he held on his course in that direction. He made frequent descents on both sides of the river, sometimes seizing by force of arms the provisions of the fierce savages seated on its banks; and sometimes procuring a supply of food by a friendly intercourse with more gentle tribes. After a long series of dangers, which he encountered with amazing fortitude, and of distresses which he supported with no less magnanimity, he reached the ocean, where new perils awaited him. These he likewise surmounted, and got safe to the Spanish settlement in the island Cubagua; from thence he sailed to Spain. The vanity natural to travellers who visit regions unknown to the rest of mankind, and the art of an adventurer, solicitous to magnify his own merit, concurred in prompting him to mingle an extraordinary

proportion of the marvellous in the narrative of his voyage. He pretended to have discovered nations so rich, that the roofs of their temples were covered with plates of gold; and described a republic of women so warlike and powerful, as to have extended their dominion over a considerable tract of the fertile plains which he had visited. Extravagant as those tales were, they gave rise to an opinion, that a region abounding with gold, distinguished by the name of *El Dorado*, and a community of Amazons, were to be found in this part of the New World; and such is the propensity of mankind to believe what is wonderful, that it has been slowly and with difficulty that reason and observation have exploded those fables. The voyage, however, even when stripped of every romantic embellishment, deserves to be recorded, not only as one of the most memorable occurrences in that adventurous age, but as the first event which led to any certain knowledge of the extensive countries that stretch eastward from the Andes to the ocean.*

Distress of Pizarro. No words can describe the consternation of Pizarro, when he did not find the bark at the confluence of the Napo and Maragnon, where he had ordered Orellana to wait for him. He would not allow himself to suspect that a man, whom he had intrusted with such an important command, could be so base and so unfeeling, as to desert him at such a juncture. But imputing his absence from the place of rendezvous to some unknown accident, he advanced above fifty leagues along the banks of the Maragnon, expecting every moment to see the bark appear with a supply of provisions. At
1541. length he came up with an officer whom Orellana had left to perish in the desert, because he had

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 4. Gomara Hist. c. 86. Vega, p. 11. lib. iii. c. 4. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. xi. c. 2—3. Rodriguez El Maragnon y Amazonas, lib. i. c. 3.

the courage to remonstrate against his perfidy. From him he learned the extent of Orellana's crime, and his followers perceived at once their own desperate situation, when deprived of their only resource. The spirit of the stoutest-hearted veteran sunk within him, and all demanded to be led back instantly. Pizarro, though he assumed an appearance of tranquillity, did not oppose their inclination. But he was now twelve hundred miles from Quito; and in that long march the Spaniards encountered hardships greater than those which they had endured in their progress outward, without the alluring hopes which then soothed and animated them under their sufferings. Hunger compelled them to feed on roots, and berries, to eat all their dogs and horses, to devour the most loathsome reptiles, and even to gnaw the leather of their saddles and sword-belts. Four thousand Indians, and two hundred and ten Spaniards, perished in this wild disastrous expedition, which continued near two years; and as fifty men were aboard the bark with Orellana, only fourscore got back to Quito. These were naked like savages, and so emaciated with famine, or worn out with fatigue, that they had more the appearance of spectres than of men."

Number of
malecon-
tents in
Peru.

But, instead of returning to enjoy the repose which his condition required, Pizarro, on entering Quito, received accounts of a fatal event that threatened calamities more dreadful to him than those through which he had passed. From the time that his brother made that partial division of his conquests which has been mentioned, the adherents of Almagro, considering themselves as proscribed by the party in power, no longer entertained any hope of bettering their condition. Great numbers in despair resorted to Lima, where the house of

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 2—5. Vega, p. 11. lib. iii. c. 3—5. 14. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. viii. c. 7, 8. lib. ix. c. 2—5, dec. 7. lib. iii. c. 14. Pizar. Varones, Illustr. 349, &c.

young Almagro was always open to them, and the slender portion of his father's fortune, which the governor allowed him to enjoy, was spent in affording them subsistence. The warm attachment with which every person who had served under the elder Almagro devoted himself to his interests, was quickly transferred to his son, who was now grown up to the age of manhood, and possessed all the qualities which

Consider
young
Almagro
as their
leader.

captivate the affections of soldiers. Of a graceful appearance, dexterous at all martial exercises, bold, open, generous, he seemed to be formed for command; and as his father, conscious of his own inferiority, from the total want of education, and been extremely attentive to have him instructed in every science becoming a gentleman; the accomplishments which he had acquired heightened the respect of his followers, as they gave him distinction and eminence among illiterate adventurers. In this young man the Almagrians found a point of union which they wanted, and looking up to him as their head, were ready to undertake any thing for his advancement. Nor was affection for Almagro their only incitement; they were urged on by their own distresses. Many of them, destitute of common necessities,^b and weary of loitering away life, a burden to their chief, or to such of their associates as had saved some remnant of their fortune from pillage and confiscation, longed impatiently for an occasion to exert their activity and courage, and began to deliberate how they might be avenged on the author of all their misery. Their frequent cabals did not pass unobserved; and the governor was warned to be on his guard against men who meditated some desperate deed, and had resolution to execute it. But either from the native intrepidity of his mind, or from contempt of persons whose po-

Conspire
against the
life of
Pizarro.

^b See Note LXXXV.

verty seemed to render their machinations of little consequence, he disregarded the admonitions of his friends. "Be in no pain," said he carelessly, "about my life; it is perfectly safe, as long as every man in Peru knows that I can in a moment cut off any head which dares to harbour a thought against it." This security gave the Almagrians full leisure to digest and ripen every part of their scheme; and Juan de Herrada, an officer of great abilities, who had the charge of Almagro's education, took the direction of their consultations, with all the zeal which this connexion inspired, and with all the authority which the ascendant that he was known to have over the mind of his pupil gave him.

On Sunday the 26th of June, at mid-day, the season of tranquillity and repose in all sultry climates, Herrada, at the head of eighteen of the most determined conspirators, sallied out of Almagro's house in complete armour; and, drawing their swords, as they advanced hastily towards the governor's palace, cried out, "Long live the king, but let the tyrant die!" Their associates, warned of their motions by a signal, were in arms at different stations ready to support them. Though Pizarro was usually surrounded by such a numerous train of attendants as suited the magnificence of the most opulent subject of the age in which he lived, yet as he was just risen from table, and most of his domestics had retired to their own apartments, the conspirators passed through the two outer courts of the palace unobserved. They were at the bottom of the staircase, before a page in waiting could give the alarm to his master, who was conversing with a few friends in a large hall. The governor, whose steady mind no form of danger could appal, starting up, called for arms, and commanded Francisco de Chaves to make fast the door. But that officer, who did not retain so much presence of mind as to obey

this prudent order, running to the top of the staircase, wildly asked the conspirators what they meant, and whither they were going? Instead of answering, they stabbed him to the heart, and burst into the hall. Some of the persons who were there threw themselves from the windows; others attempted to fly; and a few drawing their swords followed their leader into an inner apartment. The conspirators, animated with having the object of their vengeance now in view, rushed forward after them. Pizarro, with no other arms than his sword and buckler, defended the entry; and, supported by his half-brother Alcantara, and his little knot of friends, he maintained the unequal contest with intrepidity worthy of his past exploits, and with the vigour of a youthful combatant. "Courage," cried he, "companions! we are yet enow to make those traitors repent of their audacity." But the armour of the conspirators protected them, while every thrust they made took effect. Alcantara fell dead at his brother's feet; his other defenders were mortally wounded. The governor, so weary that he could hardly wield his sword, and no longer able to parry the many weapons furiously aimed at him, received a deadly thrust full in his throat, sunk to the ground, and expired.

Almagro
acknowledged as
his suc-
cessor.

As soon as he was slain, the assassins ran out into the streets, and waving their bloody swords, proclaimed the death of the tyrant. Above two hundred of their associates having joined them, they conducted young Almagro in solemn procession through the city, and assembling the magistrates and principal citizens, compelled them to acknowledge him as lawful successor to his father in his government. The palace of Pizarro, together with the houses of several of his adherents, were pillaged by the soldiers, who had the satisfaction at once of being avenged on their enemies, and of enriching themselves

by the spoils of those through whose hands all the wealth of Peru had passed.*

New appearances of discord. The boldness and success of the conspiracy, as well as the name and popular qualities of

Almagro, drew many soldiers to his standard. Every adventurer of desperate fortune, all who were dissatisfied with Pizarro, and from the rapaciousness of his government in the latter years of his life the number of malecontents was considerable, declared without hesitation in favour of Almagro, and he was soon at the head of eight hundred of the most gallant veterans in Peru. As his youth and inexperience disqualified him from taking the command of them himself, he appointed Herrada to act as general. But though Almagro speedily collected such a respectable force, the acquiescence in his government was far from being general. Pizarro had left many friends to whom his memory was dear; the barbarous assassination of a man to whom his country was so highly indebted, filled every impartial person with horror. The ignominious birth of Almagro, as well as the doubtful title on which he founded his pretensions, led others to consider him as a usurper. The officers who commanded in some provinces refused to recognise his authority, until it was confirmed by the emperor. In others, particularly at Cuzco, the royal standard was erected, and preparations were begun in order to revenge the murder of their ancient leader.

Arrival of Vaca de Castro. Those seeds of discord, which could not have lain long dormant, acquired great vigour and activity, when the arrival of Vaca de Castro was known. After a long and disastrous voyage, he was driven by stress of weather into a small harbour in the province of Popayan; and proceeding from thence by land, after a journey no

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 6—8. Gomara Hist. c. 144, 145. Vega, p. 11. lib. iii. c. 5—7. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. x. c. 4—7. Pizarro Var. Illust. p. 183.

less tedious than difficult, he reached Quito. In his way he received accounts of Pizarro's death, and of the events which followed upon it. Who assumes the title of governor. He immediately produced the royal commission appointing him governor of Peru, with the same privileges and authority; and his jurisdiction was acknowledged without hesitation by Benalcazar, adelantado or lieutenant-general for the emperor in Popayan, and by Pedro de Puelles, who, in the absence of Gonzalo Pizarro, had the command of the troops left in Quito. Vaca de Castro not only assumed the supreme authority, but shewed that he possessed the talents which the exercise of it at that juncture required. By his influence and address he soon assembled such a body of troops, as not only to set him above all fear of being exposed to any insult from the adverse party, but enabled him to advance from Quito with the dignity that became his character. By dispatching persons of confidence to the different settlements in Peru, with a formal notification of his arrival and of his commission, he communicated to his countrymen the royal pleasure with respect to the government of the country. By private emissaries, he excited such officers as had discovered their disapprobation of Almagro's proceedings, to manifest their duty to their sovereign by supporting the person honoured with his commission. Those measures were productive of great effects. Encouraged by the approach of the new governor, or prepared by his machinations, the loyal were confirmed in their principles, and avowed them with greater boldness; the timid ventured to declare their sentiments; the neutral and wavering, finding it necessary to choose a side, began to lean to that which now appeared to be the safest, as well as the most just.^d

^d Benson, lib. iii. c. 2. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 41. Gomara, c. 146, 147. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. x. c. 1-3, 7, &c.

Conduct
of Almagro.

Almagro observed the rapid progress of this spirit of disaffection to his cause, and in order to give an effectual check to it before the arrival of Vaca de Castro, he set out at the head of his troops for Cuzco, where the most considerable body of opponents had erected the royal standard, under the command of Pedro Alvarez Holguin. During his march thither, Herrada, the skilful guide of his youth, and of his counsels, died; and from that time his measures were conspicuous for their violence, but concerted with little sagacity, and executed with no address. Holguin, who, with forces far inferior to those of the opposite party, was descending towards the coast at the very time that Almagro was on his way to Cuzco, deceived his unexperienced adversary by a very simple stratagem, avoided an engagement, and effected a junction with Alvarado, an officer of note, who had been the first to declare against Almagro as a usurper.

Progress
of Vaca de
Castro.

Soon after, Vaca de Castro entered their camp with the troops which he brought from Quito, and erecting the royal standard before his own tent, he declared that, as governor, he would discharge in person all the functions of general of their combined forces. Though formed by the tenor of his past life to the habits of a sedentary and pacific profession, he at once assumed the activity and discovered the decision of an officer long accustomed to command. Knowing his strength to be now far superior to that of the enemy, he was impatient to terminate the contest by a battle. Nor did the followers of Almagro, who had no hopes of obtaining a pardon for a crime so atrocious as the murder of the governor, decline that mode of decision. They met at Chupaz, about two hundred miles from Cuzco, and fought with all the fierce animosity inspired by the violence of civil

Sept. 16.

rage, the rancour of private enmity, the eagerness of revenge, and the last efforts of despair. Victory, after remaining long doubtful, declared at ^{Defeats} ^{Almagro.} last for Vaca de Castro. The superior number of his troops, his own intrepidity, and the martial talents of Francisco de Carvajal, a veteran officer formed under the Great Captain in the wars of Italy, and who on that day laid the foundation of his future fame in Peru, triumphed over the bravery of his opponents, though led on by young Almagro with a gallant spirit, worthy of a better cause, and deserving another fate. The carnage was great in proportion to the number of the combatants. Many of the vanquished, especially such as were conscious that they might be charged with being accessory to the assassination of Pizarro, rushing on the swords of the enemy, chose to fall like soldiers, rather than wait an ignominious doom. Of fourteen hundred men, the total amount of combatants on both sides, five hundred lay dead on the field, and the number of the wounded was still greater.*

Severity
of his pro-
ceedings.

If the military talents displayed by Vaca de Castro, both in the council and in the field, surprised the adventurers in Peru, they were still more astonished at his conduct after the victory. As he was by nature a rigid dispenser of justice, and persuaded that it required examples of extraordinary severity to restrain the licentious spirit of soldiers so far removed from the seat of government, he proceeded directly to try his prisoners as rebels. Forty were condemned to suffer the death of traitors, others were banished from Peru. Their leader, who made his escape from the battle, being betrayed by some of his officers, was publicly beheaded in Cuzco; and in him the name

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 12—19. Gomara, c. 148. Vega, p. 11, lib. iii. c. 11—18. Herrera, dec. 7, lib. i. c. 1—3, lib. iii. c. 1—11.

of Almagro, and the spirit of the party, was extinct.^f

Consultations of the emperor concerning his dominions in America. During those violent convulsions in Peru, the emperor and his ministers were intently employed in preparing regulations, by which they hoped, not only to re-establish tranquility there, but to introduce a more perfect system of internal policy into all their settlements in the New World. It is manifest from all the events recorded in the history of America, that, rapid and extensive as the Spanish conquests there had been, they were not carried on by any regular exertion of the national force, but by the occasional efforts of private adventurers. After fitting out a few of the first armaments for discovering new regions, the court of Spain, during the busy reigns of Ferdinand and of Charles V., the former the most intriguing prince of the age, and the latter the most ambitious, was encumbered with such a multiplicity of schemes, and involved in war with so many nations of Europe, that he had not leisure to attend to distant and less interesting objects. The care of prosecuting discovery, or of attempting conquest, was abandoned to individuals; and with such ardour did men push forward in this new career, on which novelty, the spirit of adventure, avarice, ambition, and the hope of meriting heaven, prompted them with combined influence to enter, that in less than half a century almost the whole of that extensive empire which Spain now possesses in the New World, was subjected to its dominion. As the Spanish court contributed nothing towards the various expeditions undertaken in America, it was not entitled to claim much from their success. The sovereignty of the conquered provinces, with the fifth of the gold and silver, was reserved for the crown;

^f Zarate, lib. iv. c. 21. Gomara, c. 150. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. iii. c. 12. lib. vi.

every thing else was seized by the associates in each expedition as their own right. The plunder of the countries which they invaded served to indemnify them for what they had expended in equipping themselves for the service, and the conquered territory was divided among them, according to rules which custom had introduced, as permanent establishments which their successful valour merited. In the infancy of those settlements, when their extent as well as their valour were unknown, many irregularities escaped observation, and it was found necessary to connive at many excesses. The conquered people were frequently pillaged with destructive rapacity, and their country parcelled out among its new masters in exorbitant shares, far exceeding the highest recompense due to their services. The rude conquerors of America, incapable of forming their establishments upon any general or extensive plan of policy, attentive only to private interest, unwilling to forego present gain from the prospect of remote or public benefit, seem to have had no object but to amass sudden wealth, without regarding what might be the consequences of the means by which they acquired it. But when time at length discovered to the Spanish court the importance of its American possessions, the necessity of new-modelling their whole frame became obvious, and in place of the maxims and practices, prevalent among military adventurers, it was found requisite to substitute the institutions of regular government.

One evil in particular called for an immediate remedy. The conquerors of Mexico and Peru imitated the fatal example of their countrymen, settled in the islands, and employed themselves in searching for gold and silver with the same inconsiderate eagerness. Similar effects followed. The natives employed in this labour by masters, who in imposing

tasks had no regard either to what they felt or to what they were able to perform, pined away and perished so fast, that there was reason to apprehend that Spain, instead of possessing countries peopled to such a degree as to be susceptible of progressive improvement, would soon remain proprietor only of a vast uninhabited desert.

The emperor and his ministers were so sensible of this, and so solicitous to prevent the extinction of the Indian race, which threatened to render their acquisitions of no value, that from time to time various laws, which I have mentioned, had been made for securing to that unhappy people more gentle and equitable treatment. But the distance of America from the seat of empire, the feebleness of government in the new colonies, the avarice and audacity of soldiers unaccustomed to restraint, prevented these salutary regulations from operating with any considerable influence. The evil continued to grow, and at this time the emperor found an interval of leisure from the affairs of Europe to take it

into attentive consideration. He consulted not only with his ministers and the members of the council of the Indies, but called upon several persons who had resided long in the New World, to aid them with the result of their experience and observation. Fortunately for the people of America, among these was Bartholomew de las Casas, who happened to be then at Madrid on a mission from a chapter of his order at Chiapa.* Though since the miscarriage of his former schemes for the relief of the Indians, he had continued shut up in his cloister, or occupied in religious functions, his zeal in behalf of the former objects of his pity was so far from abating, that, from an increased knowledge of their sufferings, its ardour had augmented. He seized eagerly this opportunity of reviving his favourite maxims concerning the treatment of the Indians. With the moving eloquence natural to a man on whose mind

The persons with whom he advises.

* Xemesal Hist. de Chiapa, p. 146.

the scenes which he had beheld had made a deep impression, he described the irreparable waste of the human species in the New World, the Indian race almost totally swept away in the islands in less than fifty years, and hastening to extinction on the continent with the same rapid decay. With the decisive tone of one strongly prepossessed with the truth of his own system, he imputed all this to a single cause, to the exactions and cruelty of his countrymen, and contended that nothing could prevent the depopulation of America, but the declaring of its natives to be freemen, and treating them as subjects, not as slaves. Nor did he confide for the success of this proposal in the powers of his oratory alone. In order to enforce them, he composed his famous treatise concerning the destruction of America,^h in which he relates, with many horrid circumstances, but with apparent marks of exaggerated description, the devastation of every province which had been visited by the Spaniards.

His solicitude to introduce a general reformation of government.

The emperor was deeply afflicted with the recital of so many actions shocking to humanity. But as his views extended far beyond those of Las Casas, he perceived that relieving the Indians from oppression was but one step towards rendering his possessions in the New World a valuable acquisition, and would be of little avail, unless he could circumscribe the power and usurpations of his own subjects there. The conquerors of America, however great their merit had been towards their country, were mostly persons of such mean birth, and of such an abject rank in society, as gave no distinction in the eye of a monarch. The exorbitant wealth with which some of them returned, gave umbrage to an age not accustomed to see men in inferior condition elevated above their level, and rising to emulate or to surpass the ancient nobility in splendour. The territories which their leaders had appropriated to themselves were of such enormous extent,ⁱ that if the

^h Remesal, p. 192. 199.

ⁱ See Note LXXXVI.

country should ever be improved in proportion to the fertility of the soil, they must grow too wealthy and too powerful for subjects. It appeared to Charles that this abuse required a remedy no less than the other, and that the regulations concerning both must be enforced by a mode of government more vigorous than had yet been introduced into America.

New regulations for this purpose.

With this view he framed a body of laws, containing many salutary appointments with respect to the constitution and powers of the supreme council of the Indies ; concerning the station and jurisdiction of the royal audiences in different parts of America ; the administration of justice ; the order of government, both ecclesiastical and civil. These were approved of by all ranks of men. But together with them were issued the following regulations, which excited universal alarm, and occasioned the most violent convulsions : “ That as the *repartimientos* or shares of lands seized by several persons appeared to be excessive, the royal audiences are empowered to reduce them to a moderate extent : that upon the death of any conqueror or planter, the lands and Indians granted to him shall not descend to his widow or children, but return to the crown : that the Indians shall henceforth be exempt from personal service, and shall not be compelled to carry the baggage of travellers, to labour in the mines, or to dive in the pearl fisheries : that the stated tribute due by them to their superior shall be ascertained, and they shall be paid as servants for any work they voluntarily perform : that all persons who are or have been in public offices, all ecclesiastics of every denomination, all hospitals and monasteries, shall be deprived of the lands and Indians allotted to them, and these be annexed to the crown : that every person in Peru, who had any criminal concern in the contests between Pizarro and Almagro, should forfeit his lands and Indians.”*

His ministers
ters re-

All the Spanish ministers who had hitherto been intrusted with the direction of American

* Herrera, dec. 7. lib. vi. c. 5. Fernandez Hist. lib. i. c. 1, 2.

monstrate
against
them.

affairs, and who were best acquainted with the state of the country, remonstrated against those regulations as ruinous to their infant colonies. They represented, that the number of Spaniards who had hitherto emigrated to the New World was so extremely small, that nothing could be expected from any effort of theirs towards improving the vast regions over which they were scattered; that the success of every scheme for this purpose must depend upon the ministry and service of the Indians, whose native indolence and aversion to labour, no prospect of benefit or promise of reward could surmount; that the moment the right of imposing a task, and exacting the performance of it, was taken from their masters, every work of industry must cease, and all the sources from which wealth began to pour in upon Spain must be stopped for ever. But Charles, tenacious at all times of his own opinions, and so much impressed at present with the view of the disorders which reigned in America, that he was willing to hazard the application even of a dangerous remedy, persisted in his resolution of publishing the laws. That they might be carried into execution with greater vigour and authority, he authorized Francisco Tello de Sandoval to repair to Mexico as *Visitador* or superintendant of that country, and to co-operate with Antonia de Mendoza, the viceroy, in enforcing them. He appointed Blasco Nugnez Vela to be governor of Peru, with the title of viceroy; and in order to strengthen his administration, he established a court of royal audience in Lima, in which four lawyers of eminence were to preside as judges.¹

Effects of
the regula-
tions in
New
Spain.

The viceroy and superintendant sailed at the same time; and an account of the laws which they were to enforce reached America before them. The entry of Sandoval into Mexico was viewed as the prelude of general ruin. The unlimited grant of liberty to the Indians affected every Spaniard in America without distinction, and there was hardly

¹ Zarate, lib. iii. c. 21. Gomara, c. 151. Vega, p. 2. lib. iii. c. 20.

one who might not on some pretext be included under the other regulations, and suffer by them. But the colony in New Spain had now been so long accustomed to the restraints of law and authority under the steady and prudent administration of Mendoza, that how much soever the spirit of the new statutes was detested and dreaded, no attempt was made to obstruct the publication of them by any act of violence unbecoming subjects. The magistrates and principal inhabitants, however, presented dutiful addresses to the viceroy and superintendant, representing the fatal consequences of enforcing them. Happily for them, Mendoza, by long residence in the country, was so thoroughly acquainted with its state, that he knew what was for its interest as well as what it could bear; and Sandoval, though new in office, displayed a degree of moderation seldom possessed by persons just entering upon the exercise of power. They engaged to suspend, for some time, the execution of what was offensive in the new laws, and not only consented that a deputation of citizens should be sent to Europe to lay before the emperor the apprehensions of his subjects in New Spain with respect to their tendency and effects, but they concurred with them in supporting their sentiments. Charles, moved by the opinion of men whose abilities and integrity entitled them to decide concerning what fell immediately under their own view, granted such a relaxation of the rigour of the laws as re-established the colony in its former tranquillity.^m

In Peru. In Peru the storm gathered with an aspect still more fierce and threatening, and was not so soon dispelled. The conquerors of Peru, of a rank much inferior to those who had subjected Mexico to the Spanish crown, farther removed from the inspection of the parent state, and intoxicated with the sudden acquisition of wealth, carried on all their operations with

^m Fernandez Hist. lib. i. c. 3, 4, 5. Vega, p. 11. lib. iii. c. 21, 22. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. v. c. 7. lib. vii. c. 14, 15. Torquem. Mond. Ind. lib. v. c. 13.

greater license and irregularity than any body of adventurers in the New World. Amidst the general subversion of law and order, occasioned by two successive civil wars, when each individual was at liberty to decide for himself, without any guide but his own interest or passions, this turbulent spirit rose above all sense of subordination. To men thus corrupted by anarchy, the introduction of regular government, the power of a viceroy, and the authority of a respectable court of judicature, would of themselves have appeared formidable restraints, to which they would have submitted with reluctance. But they revolted with indignation against the idea of complying with laws, by which they were to be stripped at once of all they had earned so hardly during many years of service and suffering. As the account of the new laws spread successively through the different settlements, the inhabitants ran together, the women in tears, and the men exclaiming against the injustice and ingratitude of their sovereign in depriving them, unheard and unconvicted, of their possessions. "Is this," cried they, "the recompense due to persons, who, without public aid, at their own expense, and by their own valour, have subjected to the crown of Castile territories of such immense extent and opulence? Are these the rewards bestowed for having endured unparalleled distress, for having encountered every species of danger in the service of their country? Whose merit is so great, whose conduct has been so irreproachable, that he may not be condemned by some penal clause in regulations, conceived in terms as loose and comprehensive, as if it had been intended that all should be entangled in their snare? Every Spaniard of note in Peru has held some public office, and all, without distinction, have been constrained to take an active part in the contest between the two rival chiefs. Were the former to be robbed of their property because they had done their duty? Were the latter to be punished on account of what they could not avoid? Shall the con-

querors of this great empire, instead of receiving marks of distinction, be deprived of the natural consolation of providing for their widows and children, and leave them to depend for subsistence on the scanty supply they can extort from unfeeling courtiers?^a We are not able now, continued they, to explore unknown regions in quest of more secure settlements; our constitutions debilitated with age, and our bodies covered with wounds, are no longer fit for active service; but still we possess vigour sufficient to assert our just rights, and we will not tamely suffer them to be wrested from us.^b

By discourses of this sort, uttered with
 An insur-
 rection
 prevented
 by the mo-
 deration
 of Castro.
 vehemence, and listened to with universal approbation, their passions were inflamed to such a pitch, that they were prepared for the most violent measures; and began to hold consultations in different places, how they might oppose the entrance of the viceroy and judges, and prevent not only the execution, but the promulgation of the new laws. From this, however, they were diverted by the address of Vaca de Castro, who flattered them with hopes, that, as soon as the viceroy and judges should arrive, and had leisure to examine their petitions and remonstrances, they would concur with them in endeavouring to procure some mitigation in the rigour of laws which had been framed without due attention either to the state of the country, or to the sentiments of the people. A great degree of accommodation to these, and even some concessions on the part of government, were now become requisite to compose the present ferment, and to soothe the colonists into submission, by inspiring them with confidence in their superiors. But without profound discernment, conciliating manners, and flexibility of temper, such

^a Herrera, dec. 7. lib. vii. c. 14, 15.

^b Gomara, c. 152. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. vi. c. 10, 11. Vega, p. 11. lib. iii. c. 20. 22. lib. iv. c. 3, 4.

The spirit
of disaffec-
tion in-
creased by
the vice-
roy.

a plan could not be carried on. The viceroy possessed none of these. Of all the qualities that fit men for high command, he was endowed only with integrity and courage; the former harsh and uncomplying, the latter bordering so frequently on rashness or obstinacy, that in his situation they were defects rather than virtues. From the moment that he landed at Tumbez, Nugnez Vela seems to have considered himself merely as an executive officer, without any discretionary power; and, regardless of whatever he observed or heard concerning the state of the country, he adhered to the letter of the regulations with unrelenting rigour. In all the towns through which he passed, the natives were declared to be free, every person in public office was deprived of his lands and servants; and as an example of obedience to others, he would not suffer a single Indian to be employed in carrying his own baggage in his march towards Lima. Amazement and consternation went before him as he approached; and so little solicitous was he to prevent these from augmenting, that, on entering the capital, he openly avowed that he came to obey the orders of his sovereign, not to dispense with his laws. This harsh declaration was accompanied with what rendered it still more intolerable, haughtiness in deportment, a tone of arrogance and decision in discourse, and an insolence of office grievous to men little accustomed to hold civil authority in high respect. Every attempt to procure a suspension or mitigation of the new laws, the viceroy considered as flowing from a spirit of disaffection that tended to rebellion. Several persons of rank were confined, and some put to death, without any form of trial. Vaca de Castro was arrested, and, notwithstanding the dignity of his former rank, and his merit, in having prevented

a general insurrection in the colony, he was loaded with chains, and shut up in the common jail.^p

The male-contents choose Gonzalo Pizarro to be their leader. But however general the indignation was against such proceedings, it is probable the hand of authority would have been strong enough to suppress it, or to prevent it bursting out with open violence, if the malecontents had not been provided with a leader of credit and eminence to unite and to direct their efforts. From the time that the purport of the new regulations was known in Peru, every Spaniard there turned his eyes towards Gonzalo Pizarro, as the only person able to avert the ruin with which they threatened the colony. From all quarters, letters and addresses were sent to him, conjuring him to stand forth as their common protector, and offering to support him in the attempt with their lives and fortunes. Gonzalo, though inferior in talents to his other brothers, was equally ambitious, and of courage no less daring. The behaviour of an ungrateful court towards his brothers and himself dwelt continually on his mind. Ferdinand a state-prisoner in Europe, the children of the governor in custody of the viceroy, and sent aboard his fleet, himself reduced to the condition of a private citizen in a country, for the discovery and conquest of which Spain was indebted to his family. These thoughts prompted him to seek for vengeance, and to assert the rights of his family, of which he now considered himself as the guardian and the heir. But as no Spaniard can easily surmount that veneration for his sovereign which seems to be interwoven in his frame, the idea of marching in arms against the royal standard filled him with horror. He hesitated long, and was still unresolved, when the violence of the viceroy, the

^p Zarate, lib. iv. c. 23—25. Gomara, c. 153—155. Vega, p. 11. lib. iv. c. 4, 5. Fernandes, lib. i. c. 6—10.

universal call of his countrymen, and the certainty of becoming soon a victim himself to the severity of the new laws, moved him to quit his residence at Chuquisaca de la Plata, and repair to Cuzco. All the inhabitants went out to meet him, and received him with transports of joy as the deliverer of the colony. In the fervour of their zeal, they elected him procurator-general of the Spanish nation in Peru, to solicit the repeal of the late regulations. They empowered him to lay their remonstrances before the royal audience in Lima, and upon pretext

1544. of danger from the Indians, authorized him to march thither in arms. Under sanction

of this nomination, Pizarro took possession of the royal treasure, appointed officers, levied soldiers, seized a large train of artillery, which Vaca de Castro had deposited in Gumanga, and set out for Lima, as if he had been advancing against a public enemy. Disaffection having now assumed a regular form, and being united under a chief of such distinguished name, many persons of note resorted to his standard; and a considerable part of the troops, raised by the viceroy to oppose his progress, deserted to him in a body.¹

Before Pizarro reached Lima, a revolution had happened there, which encouraged him to proceed with almost certainty of success. The vio-

Disen-
sions of the
viceroy
and court
of audi-
ence.

lence of the viceroy's administration was not more formidable to the Spaniards of Peru, than his overbearing haughtiness was odious

to his associates, the judges of the royal audience. During their voyage from Spain, some symptoms of coldness between the viceroy and them began to appear.² But as soon as they entered upon the exercise of their respective offices, both parties

¹ Zarate, lib. v. c. 1. Gomara, c. 156, 157. Vega, p. 11. lib. iv. c. 4—12. Fernandez, lib. i. c. 12—17. Herrera, dec. 7, lib. vii. c. 18, &c. lib. viii. c. 1—5.

² Gomara, c. 171.

were so much exasperated by frequent contests, arising from interference of jurisdiction and contrariety of opinion, that their mutual disgust soon grew into open enmity. The judges thwarted the viceroy in every measure; set at liberty prisoners whom he had confined, justified the malecontents, and applauded their remonstrances. At a time when both departments of government should have united against the approaching enemy, they were contending with each other for superiority. The judges at length prevailed. The viceroy, universally odious, and abandoned even by his own guards, was seized in his palace, and carried to a desert island on the coast, to be kept there until he could be sent home to Spain.

The vice-
roy impris-
oned.
Sept. 18.

Views of Pizarro. The judges, in consequence of this, having assumed the supreme direction of affairs into their own hands, issued a proclamation suspending the execution of the obnoxious laws, and sent a message to Pizarro, requiring him, as they had already granted whatever he could request, to dismiss his troops, and to repair to Lima with fifteen or twenty attendants. They could hardly expect that a man so daring and ambitious would tamely comply with this requisition. It was made, probably, with no such intention, but only to throw a decent veil over their own conduct; for Cepeda, the president of the court of audience, a pragmatical and aspiring lawyer, seems to have held a secret correspondence with Pizarro, and had already formed the plan, which he afterward executed, of devoting himself to his service. The imprisonment of the viceroy, the usurpation of the judges, together with the universal confusion and anarchy consequent upon events so singular and unexpected, opened new and vast prospects to Pizarro. He now beheld the supreme power within his reach. Nor did he want courage to push on towards the object which fortune presented to

his view. Carvajal, the prompter of his resolutions, and guide of all his actions, had long fixed his eye upon it as the only end at which Pizarro ought to aim. Instead of the inferior function of procurator for the Spanish settlements in Peru, he openly demanded to be governor and captain-general of the whole province, and required the court of audience to grant him a commission to that effect. At the head of twelve hundred men, within a mile of Lima, where there was neither leader nor army to oppose him, such a request carried with it the authority of a command. But the judges, either from unwillingness to relinquish power, or from a desire of preserving some attention to appearances, hesitated, or seemed to hesitate, about complying with what he demanded. Carvajal, impatient of delay, and impetuous in all his operations, He assumes the government. marched into the city by night, seized several officers of distinction obnoxious to Pizarro, and hanged them without the formality of a trial. Next morning the court of audience issued a commission in the emperor's name, appointing Pizarro governor of Peru, with full powers, civil as well as military, and he entered the town that day with extraordinary pomp, to take possession of his new dignity.*

Oct. 28. The viceroy recovers his liberty. But amidst the disorder and turbulence which accompanied this total dissolution of the frame of government, the minds of men, set loose from the ordinary restraints of law and authority, acted with such capricious irregularity, that events no less extraordinary than unexpected followed in a rapid succession. Pizarro had scarcely begun to exercise the new powers with which he was invested, when he beheld formidable enemies rise up to oppose him. The viceroy having been put on board a vessel by the judges of the audience, in order that he might be car-

* Zarate, lib. v. c. 8—10. Vega, p. 11. lib. iv. c. 13—19. Gomara, c. 159—163. Fernandez, lib. i. c. 18—25. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. viii. c. 10—20.

ried to Spain under custody of Juan Alvarez one of their own number; as soon as they were out at sea, Alvarez, either touched with remorse, or moved by fear, kneeled down to his prisoner, declaring him from that moment to be free, and that he himself, and every person in the ship, would obey him as the legal representative of their sovereign. Nugnez Vela ordered the pilot of the vessel to shape his course towards Tumbez. and as soon as he landed there, erected the royal standard, and resumed his functions of viceroy. Several persons of note, to whom the contagion of the seditious spirit which reigned at Cuzco and Lima had not reached, instantly avowed their resolution to support his authority.¹ The violence of Pizarro's government, who observed every individual with the jealousy natural to usurpers, and who punished every appearance of disaffection with unforgiving severity, soon augmented the number of the viceroy's adherents, as it forced some leading men in the colony to fly to him for refuge. While he was gathering such strength at Tumbez, that his forces began to assume the appearance of what was considered as an army in America, Diego Centeno, a bold and active officer, exasperated by the cruelty and oppression of Pizarro's lieutenant-governor in the province of Charcas, formed a conspiracy against his life, cut him off, and declared for the viceroy.²

Pizarro, though alarmed with those appearances of hostility in the opposite extremes of the empire, was not disconcerted. He prepared to assert the authority to which he had attained, with the spirit and conduct of an officer accustomed to command, and marched directly against the viceroy as the enemy who was nearest as well as most formidable. As he was master of the public revenues in Peru, and most of the military men were attached to his family,

1545.
Pizarro
marches
against
him.

¹ Zarate, lib. 5. c. 9. Gomara, c. 165. Fernandez, lib. 1. c. 23. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. xiii. c. 15.

² Zarate, lib. v. c. 18. Gomara, c. 169. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. ix. c. 37.

his troops were so numerous, that the viceroy, unable to face them, retreated towards Quito. Pizarro followed him; and in that long march, through a wild mountainous country, suffered hardships and encountered difficulties, which no troops but those accustomed to serve in America could have endured or surmounted.* The viceroy had scarcely reached Quito, when the vanguard of Pizarro's forces appeared, led by Carvajal, who, though near fourscore, was as hardy and active as any young soldier under his command. Nugnez Vela instantly abandoned a town incapable of defence, and with rapidity more resembling a flight than a retreat, marched into the province of Popayan. Pizarro continued to pursue; but finding it impossible to overtake him, returned to Quito. From thence he dispatched Carvajal to oppose Centeno, who was growing formidable in the southern provinces of the empire, and he himself remained there to make head against the viceroy.*

The vice-
roy de-
feated,

By his own activity, and the assistance of Benalcazar, Nugnez Vela soon assembled four hundred men in Popayan. As he retained, amidst all his disasters, the same elevation of mind, and the same high sense of his own dignity, he rejected with disdain the advice of some of his followers who urged him to make overtures of accommodation to Pizarro, declaring that it was only by the sword that a contest with rebels could be decided. With this intention he marched back to Quito. Pizarro, relying on the superior number, and still more on the discipline and valour of his troops, advanced resolutely to meet him. The battle was fierce and bloody, both parties fighting like men who knew that the possession of a great empire, the fate of their leaders, and their own future fortune, depended upon the issue of

1546.

Jan. 18.

* See Note LXXXVII.

* Zarate, lib. v. c. 15, 16—24. Gomara, c. 167. Vega, p. 11. lib. iv. c. 25—28. Fernandez, lib. i. c. 34. 40. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. viii. c. 16. 20—27.

that day. But Pizarro's veterans rushed forward with such regular and well-directed force, that they soon began to make impression on their enemies. The viceroy, by extraordinary exertions, in which the abilities of a commander and the courage of a soldier were equally displayed, held victory for some time in suspense. At length he fell, pierced with many wounds; and the rout of his followers became general. They were hotly pursued. His head was cut off, and placed on the public gibbet in Quito, which Pizarro entered in triumph. The troops assembled by Centeno were dispersed soon after by Carvajal, and he himself compelled to fly to the mountains, where he remained for several months concealed in a cave. Every person in Peru, from the frontiers of Popayan to those of Chili, submitted to Pizarro; and by his fleet, under Pedro de Hinojosa, he had not only the unrivalled command of the South sea, but had taken possession of Panama, and placed a garrison in Nombre de Dios, on the opposite side of the isthmus, which rendered him master of the only avenue of communication between Spain and Peru, that was used at that period.'

Pizarro
advised to
resume the
sovereignty of
Peru; After this decisive victory, Pizarro and his followers remained for some time at Quito, and during the first transports of their exultation, they ran into every excess of licentious indulgence, with the riotous spirit usual among low adventurers upon extraordinary success. But amidst this dissipation, their chief and his confidants were obliged to turn their thoughts to what was serious, and deliberated with much solicitude concerning the part that he ought now to take. Carvajal, no less bold and decisive in council than in the field, had from the beginning warned Pizarro, that in the career on which he was entering, it was vain to think of holding a middle

y Zarate, lib. v. c. 31, 32. Gomara, c. 170. Vega, p. 11. lib. iv. c. 33, 34. Fernandez, lib. i. c. 51—54. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. x. c. 12. 19—22. dec. 8. lib. i. c. 1—3. Benzo, lib. iii. c. 12.

course; that he must either boldly aim at all, or attempt nothing. From the time that Pizarro obtained possession of the government of Peru, he inculcated the same maxim with greater earnestness. Upon receiving an account of the victory at Quito, he remonstrated with him in a tone still more peremptory. "You have usurped," said he, in a letter written to Pizarro on that occasion, "the supreme power in this country, in contempt of the emperor's commission to the viceroy. You have marched in hostile array against the royal standard; you have attacked the representative of your sovereign in the field, have defeated him, and cut off his head. Think not that ever a monarch will forgive such insults on his dignity, or that any reconciliation with him can be cordial or sincere. Depend no longer on the precarious favour of another. Assume yourself the sovereignty over a country, to the dominion of which your family has a title founded on the rights both of discovery and conquest. It is in your power to attach every Spaniard in Peru of any consequence inviolably to your interest by liberal grants of lands and of Indians, or by instituting ranks of nobility, and creating titles of honour similar to those which are courted with so much eagerness in Europe. By establishing orders of knighthood, with privileges and distinctions resembling those in Spain, you may bestow a gratification upon the officers in your service, suited to the ideas of military men. Nor is it to your countrymen only that you ought to attend; endeavour to gain the natives. By marrying the coya, or daughter of the sun next in succession to the crown, you will induce the Indians, out of veneration for the blood of their ancient princes, to unite with the Spaniards in support of your authority.—Thus, at the head of the ancient inhabitants of Peru, as well as of the new settlers there, you may set at defiance the power of Spain, and repel with ease any feeble force which it can send at

such a distance." Cepeda, the lawyer, who was now Pizarro's confidential counsellor, warmly seconded Carvajal's exhortations, and employed whatever learning he possessed in demonstrating, that all the founders of great monarchies had been raised to pre-eminence, not by the antiquity of their lineage, or the validity of their rights, but by their own aspiring valour and personal merit."

But chooses
to negotiate
with the
court of
Spain.

Pizarro listened attentively to both, and could not conceal the satisfaction with which he contemplated the object that they presented to his view. But happily for the tranquillity of the world, few men possess that superior strength of mind, and extent of abilities, which are capable of forming and executing such daring schemes, as cannot be accomplished without overturning the established order of society, and violating those maxims of duty which men are accustomed to hold sacred. The mediocrity of Pizarro's talents circumscribed his ambition within more narrow limits. Instead of aspiring at independent power, he confined his views to the obtaining from the court of Spain a confirmation of the authority which he now possessed; and for that purpose, he sent an officer of distinction thither, to give such a representation of his conduct, and of the state of the country, as might induce the emperor and his ministers, either from inclination or from necessity, to continue him in his present station.

Consultations
of the
Spanish mi-
nisters.

While Pizarro was deliberating with respect to the part which he should take, consultations were held in Spain with no less solicitude concerning the measures which ought to be pursued in order to re-establish the emperor's authority in Peru. Though unacquainted with the last excesses of outrage to which the malecontents had proceeded in that country, the court had received an account of the insurrec-

* Vega p. 11. lib. iv. c. 40. Fernandez, lib. I. c. 34. lib. II. c. 1. 40. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. II. c. 10.

tion against the viceroy, of his imprisonment, and the usurpation of the government by Pizarro. A revolution so alarming called for an immediate interposition of the emperor's abilities and authority. But as he was fully occupied at that time in Germany, in conducting the war against the famous league of Smalkalde, one of the most interesting and arduous enterprises in his reign, the care of providing a remedy for the disorders in Peru devolved upon his son Philip, and the counsellors whom Charles had appointed to assist him in the government of Spain during his absence. At first view, the actions of Pizarro and his adherents appeared so repugnant to the duty of subjects towards their sovereign, that the greater part of the ministers insisted on declaring them instantly to be guilty of rebellion, and on proceeding to punish them with exemplary rigour. But when the fervour of their zeal and indignation began to abate, innumerable obstacles to the execution of this measure presented themselves. The veteran bands of infantry, the strength and glory of the Spanish armies, were then employed in Germany. Spain, exhausted of men and money by a long series of wars, in which she had been involved by the restless ambition of two successive monarchs, could not easily equip an armament of sufficient force to reduce Pizarro. To transport any respectable body of troops to a country so remote as Peru, appeared almost impossible. While Pizarro continued master of the South sea, the direct route by Nombre de Dios and Panama was impracticable. An attempt to march to Quito by land through the new kingdom of Granada, and the province of Popayan, across regions of prodigious extent, desolate, unhealthy, or inhabited by fierce and hostile tribes, would be attended with unsurmountable dangers and hardships. The passage to the South sea by the straits of Magellan was so tedious, so uncertain, and so little known in that age, that no confi-

course of navigation so remote and precarious. Nothing then remained but to relinquish the system which the ardour of their loyalty had first suggested, and to attempt by lenient measures what could not be effected by force. It was manifest from Pizarro's solicitude to represent his conduct in a favourable light to the emperor, that notwithstanding the excesses of which he had been guilty, he still retained sentiments of veneration for his sovereign. By a proper application to these, together with some such concessions as should discover a spirit of moderation and forbearance in government, there was still room to hope that he might be yet reclaimed, or the ideas of loyalty natural to Spaniards might so far revive among his followers, that they would no longer lend their aid to uphold his usurped authority.

Gasca appointed to repair to Peru as president.

The success, however, of this negotiation, no less delicate than it was important, depended entirely on the abilities and address of the person to whom it should be committed. After weighing with much attention the comparative merit of various persons, the Spanish ministers fixed with unanimity of choice upon Pedro de la Gasca, a priest in no higher station than that of counsellor to the inquisition. Though in no public office, he had been occasionally employed by government in affairs of trust and consequence, and had conducted them with no less skill than success; displaying a gentle and insinuating temper, accompanied with much firmness; probity, superior to any feeling of private interest; and a cautious circumspection in concerting measures, followed by such vigour in executing them, as is rarely found in alliance with the other. These qualities marked him out for the function to which he was destined. The emperor, to whom Gasca was not unknown, warmly approved of the choice, and communicated it to him in a letter, containing expressions of good-will and confidence, no less

honourable to the prince who wrote, than to the subject who received it. Gasca, notwithstanding his advanced age and feeble constitution, and though, from the apprehensions natural to a man, who, during the course of his life, had never been out of his own country, he dreaded the effects of a long voyage, and of an unhealthy climate,* did not hesitate a moment about complying with the will of his sovereign. But as a

His moderation.

proof that it was from this principle alone he acted, he refused a bishopric which was offered to him, in order that he might appear in Peru with a more dignified character; he would accept of no higher title than that of president of the court of audience in Lima; and declared that he would receive no salary on account of his discharging the duties of that office. All he required was, that the expense of supporting his family should be defrayed by the public, and as he was to go like a minister of peace with his gown and breviary, and without any retinue but a few domestics, this would not load the revenue with any enormous burden.^b

The powers committed to him.

But while he discovered such disinterested moderation with respect to whatever related personally to himself, he demanded his official powers in a very different tone. He insisted, as he was to be employed in a country so remote from the seat of government, where he could not have recourse to his sovereign for new instructions on every emergence; and as the whole success of his negotiations must depend upon the confidence which the people with whom he had to treat could place in the extent of his powers, that he ought to be invested with unlimited authority; that his jurisdiction must reach to all persons and to all causes; that he must be empowered to pardon, to punish, or to reward; as circumstances and the behaviour of different men might require; that in case of resistance from the

* Fernandez, lib. 2. c. 15.

^b Zarate, no. vi. c. 6. Gomara, c. 174. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 14—16. Vega, p. 11, lib. v. c. 1. Herrera, dec. 3, lib. 1. c. 4, &c.

malecontents, he might be authorized to reduce them to obedience by force of arms, to levy troops for that purpose, and to call for assistance from the governors of all the Spanish settlements in America. These powers, though manifestly conducive to the great objects of his mission, appeared to the Spanish ministers to be inalienable prerogatives of royalty, which ought not to be delegated to a subject, and they refused to grant them. But the emperor's views were more enlarged. As from the nature of his employment, Gasca must be intrusted with discretionary power in several points, and all his efforts might prove ineffectual if he was circumscribed in any one particular, Charles scrupled not to invest him with authority to the full extent that he demanded. Highly satisfied with this fresh proof of his master's confidence, Gasca hastened his departure, and, without either money or troops, set out to quell a formidable rebellion.^c

July 27.

His arrival
at Panama.

On his arrival at Nombre de Dios, he found Herman Mexia, an officer of note, posted there, by order of Pizarro, with a considerable body of men, to oppose the landing of any hostile forces. But Gasca appeared in such pacific guise, with a train so little formidable, and with a title of no such dignity as to excite terror, that he was received with much respect. From Nombre de Dios he advanced to Panama, and met with a similar reception from Hinojosa, whom Pizarro had intrusted with the government of that town, and the command of his fleet stationed there. In both places he held the same language, declaring that he was sent by their sovereign as a messenger of peace, not as a minister of vengeance; that he came to redress all their grievances, to revoke the laws which had excited alarm, to pardon past offences, and to re-establish order and justice in the government of Peru. His mild deportment, the simplicity of his manners, the sanctity of his

profession, and a winning appearance of candour, gained credit to his declarations. The veneration due to a person clothed with legal authority, and acting in virtue of a royal commission, began to revive among men accustomed for some time to nothing more respectable than a usurped jurisdiction. Hinojosa, Mexia, and several other officers of distinction, to each of whom Gasca applied separately, were gained over to his interest, and waited only for some decent occasion of declaring openly in his favour.^d

Violent
proceed-
ings of
Pizarro. This the violence of Pizarro soon afforded them. As soon as he heard of Gasca's arrival at Panama, though he received, at the same time, an account of the nature of his commission, and was informed of his offers not only to render every Spaniard in Peru easy concerning what was past, by an act of general oblivion; but secure with respect to the future by repealing the obnoxious laws; instead of accepting with gratitude his sovereign's gracious concessions, he was so much exasperated on finding that he was not to be continued in his station as governor of the country, that he instantly resolved to oppose the president's entry into Peru, and to prevent his exercising any jurisdiction there. To this desperate resolution he added another highly preposterous. He sent a new deputation to Spain to justify this conduct, and to insist, in the name of all the communities in Peru, for a confirmation of the government to himself during life, as the only means of preserving tranquillity there. The persons intrusted with this strange commission, intimated the intention of Pizarro to the president, and required him, in his name, to depart from Panama and return to Spain. They carried likewise secret instructions to Hinojosa, directing him to offer Gasca a present of fifty thousand pesos, if he would comply voluntarily with

Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 21, &c. Zarate, lib. vi. c. 6, 7. Gomara, c. 175. Vega, p. 11. lib. v. c. 3.

what was demanded of him; and if he should continue obstinate, to cut him off, either by assassination or poison.*

Many circumstances concurred in pushing Gasca on Pizarro to those wild measures. Having gains his fleet. been once accustomed to supreme command, he could not bear the thoughts of descending to a private station. Conscious of his own demerit, he suspected that the emperor studied only to deceive him, and would never pardon the outrages which he had committed. His chief confidants, no less guilty, entertained the same apprehensions. The approach of Gasca without any military force excited no terror. There were now above six thousand Spaniards settled in Peru; and at the head of these he doubted not to maintain his own independence, if the court of Spain should refuse to grant what he required. But he knew not that a spirit of defection had already begun to spread among those whom he trusted most. Hinojosa, amazed at Pizarro's precipitate resolution of setting himself in opposition to the emperor's commission, and disdaining to be his instrument in perpetrating the odious crimes pointed out in his secret instructions, publicly recognised the title of the president to the supreme authority in Peru. The officers under his command did the same. Such was the contagious influence of the example, that it reached even the deputies who had been sent from Peru; and at the time when Pizarro expected to hear either of Gasca's return to Spain, or of his death, he received an account of his being master of the fleet, of Panama, and of the troops stationed there.

1547. Irritated almost to madness by events so unexpected, he openly prepared for war; and in order to give some colour of justice to his arms, he appointed the court of audience in Lima to proceed to the trial of Gasca, for the crimes of having seized

* Zarate, lib. vi. c. 8. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 33, 34. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. 2, c. 9, 10. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iii. c. 1.

his ships, seduced his officers, and prevented his deputies from proceeding in their voyage to Spain. Cepeda, though acting as a judge in virtue of the royal commission, did not scruple to prostitute the dignity of his function by finding Gasca guilty of treason, and condemning him to death on that account.* Wild, and even ridiculous as this proceeding was, it imposed on the low illiterate adventurers, with whom Peru was filled, by the semblance of a legal sanction warranting Pizarro to carry on hostilities against a convicted traitor. Soldiers accordingly resorted from every quarter to his standard, and he was soon at the head of a thousand men, the best equipped that had ever taken the field in Peru.

Prepara-
tions of
Gasca.

Gasca, on his part, perceiving that force must be employed in order to accomplish the purpose of his mission, was no less assiduous in collecting troops from Nicaragua, Carthagena, and other settlements on the continent; and with such success, that he was soon in a condition to detach a squadron of his fleet, with a considerable body of soldiers,

to the coast of Peru. Their appearance excited a dreadful alarm: and though they did not attempt for some time to make any descent, they did more effectual service by setting ashore in different places persons who dispersed copies of the act of general indemnity, and the revocation of the late edicts; and who made known every where the pacific intentions, as well as mild temper, of the president. The effect of spreading this information was wonderful. All who were dissatisfied with Pizarro's violent administration, all who retained any sentiments of fidelity to their sovereign, began to meditate revolt. Some openly deserted a cause which they now deemed to be unjust. Canteno, leaving the cave in which he lay concealed, assembled about fifty of his former adherents, and

Insurrec-
tion of
Canteno,

* Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 55. Vega, p. 11. lib. v. c. 7. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 6.

with this feeble half-armed band advanced boldly to Cuzco. By a sudden attack in the night-time, in which he displayed no less military skill than valour, he rendered himself master of that capital, though defended by a garrison of five hundred men. Most of these having ranged themselves under his banners, he had soon the command of a respectable body of troops.^h

Against
whom Pi-
zarro
marches,

Pizarro, though astonished at beholding one enemy approaching by sea, and another by land, at a time when he trusted to the union of all Peru in his favour, was of a spirit more undaunted, and more accustomed to the vicissitudes of fortune, than to be disconcerted or appalled. As the danger from Centeno's operations was the most urgent, he instantly set out to oppose him. Having provided horses for all his soldiers, he marched with amazing rapidity. But every morning he found his force diminished, by numbers who had left him during the night; and though he became suspicious to excess, and punished without mercy all whom he suspected, the rage of desertion was too violent to be checked. Before he got within sight of the enemy at Huarina, near the lake Titiaca, he could not muster more than four hundred soldiers. But these he justly considered as men of tried attachment, on whom he might depend. They were indeed the boldest and most desperate of his followers, conscious, like himself, of crimes for which they could hardly expect forgiveness, and without any hope but in the success of their arms. With these he did

Oct. 20.

not hesitate to attack Centeno's troops, though double to his own in number. The royalists did not decline the combat. It was the most obstinate and bloody

And de-
feats him.

that had hitherto been fought in Peru. At length the intrepid valour of Pizarro, and the superiority of Carvajal's military talents, triumphed over numbers, and obtained a complete victory. The

^h Zarate, lib. vi. c. 19—16. Gomara, c. 180, 181. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 28. 64, &c.

booty was immense,¹ and the treatment of the vanquished cruel. By this signal success the reputation of Pizarro was re-established, and being now deemed invincible in the field, his army increased daily in number.²

But events happened in other parts of Peru, which more than counterbalanced the splendid victory at Huarina. Pizarro had scarcely left Lima, when the citizens, weary of his oppressive dominion, erected the royal standard, and Aldana, with a detachment of soldiers from the fleet, took possession of the town. About the same time,³ Gasca landed at Tumbez with five hundred men. Encouraged by his presence, every settlement in the low country declared for the king. The situation of the two parties was now perfectly reversed; Cuzco and the adjacent provinces were possessed by Pizarro; all the rest of the empire, from Quito southward, acknowledged the jurisdiction of the president. As his numbers augmented fast, Gasca advanced into the interior part of the country. His behaviour still continued to be gentle and unassuming; he expressed, on every occasion his ardent wish of terminating the contest without bloodshed. More solicitous to reclaim than to punish, he upbraided no man for past offences, but received them as a father receives penitent children returning to a sense of their duty. Though desirous of peace, he did not slacken his preparations for war. He appointed the general rendezvous of his troops in the fertile valley of Xauxa, on the road to Cuzco.⁴ There he remained for some months, not only that he might have time to make another attempt towards an accommodation with Pizarro, but that he might train his new soldiers to the use of arms, and accustom them to the discipline of a camp, before he led them against a body of victorious

Gasca
lands at
Peru,

¹ See Note LXXXVIII.

² Zárate, lib. vii. c. 2, 3. Gomara, c. 181. Vega, p. 11. lib. 5. c. 18, &c. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 79. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 1, 2.

Zárate, lib. vi. c. 17. ³ Zárate, lib. vii. c. 9. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 77. 82.

veterans. Pizarro, intoxicated with the success which had hitherto accompanied his arms, and elated with having again near a thousand men under his command, refuse to listen to any terms, although Cepeda, together with several of his officers, and even Carvajal himself,^a gave it as their advice to close with the president's offer of general indemnity, and the revocation of the obnoxious laws.^o Gasca having tried in vain every expedient to avoid imbruing his hands in the blood of his countrymen, began to move towards Cuzco, at the head of sixteen hundred men.

Both parties prepared for battle 1548. Pizarro, confident of victory, suffered the royalists to pass all the rivers which lie between Guamanga and Cuzco without opposition, and to advance within four leagues of that capital, flattering himself that a defeat in such a situation as rendered escape impracticable would at once terminate the war. He then marched out to meet the enemy, and Carvajal chose his ground, and made the disposition of the troops, with the discerning eye, and profound knowledge in the art of war conspicuous in all its operations. As the two armies moved forwards slowly to the charge, the appearance of each was singular. In that of Pizarro, composed of men enriched with the spoils of the most opulent country in America, every officer, and almost all the private men, were clothed in stuffs of silk, or brocade, embroidered with gold and silver; and their horses, their arms, their standards, were adorned with all the pride of military pomp.^p That of Gasca, though not so splendid, exhibited what was no less striking. He himself, accompanied by the archbishop of Lima, the bishops of Quito and Cuzco, and a great number of ecclesiastics, marching along the

^a See Note LXXXIX.

^o Zarate, lib. vii. c. 6. Vega, p. 11. lib. v. c. 37.

^p Zarate, lib. vi. c. 11.

lines, blessing the men, and encouraging them to a resolute discharge of their duty.

Pizarro
deserted
by his
troops.

When both armies were just ready to engage, Cepeda set spurs to his horse, galloped off, and surrendered himself to the president. Garcilasso de la Vega, and other officers of note, followed his example. The revolt of persons in such high rank struck all with amazement. The mutual confidence on which the union and strength of armies depend, ceased at once. Distrust and consternation spread from rank to rank. Some silently slipped away, others threw down their arms, the greatest number went over to the royalists. Pizarro, Carvajal, and some leaders, employed authority, threats, and entreaties, to stop them, but in vain. In less than half an hour, a body of men, which might have decided the fate of the Peruvian empire, was totally dispersed. Pizarro, seeing all irretrievably lost, cried out in amazement to a few officers who still faithfully adhered to him, "What remains for us to do?"—"Let us rush," replied one of them, "upon the enemy's firmest battalion, and die like Romans." Dejected with such a reverse of fortune, he had not spirit to follow this soldierly counsel, and with a tameness disgraceful to his former fame, he surrendered to one of Gasca's officers. Carvajal, endeavouring to escape, was overtaken and seized.

Taken,

and put to
death.

Gasca, happy in this bloodless victory, did not stain it with cruelty. Pizarro, Carvajal, and a small number of the most distinguished or notorious offenders, were punished capitally. Pizarro was beheaded on the day after he surrendered. He submitted to his fate with a composed dignity, and seemed desirous to atone by repentance for the crimes which he had committed. The end of Carvajal was suitable to his life. On his trial he offered no defence. When the sentence adjudging him to be hanged was pro-

nounced, he carelessly replied; "One can die but once." During the interval between the sentence and execution, he discovered^a no sign either of remorse for the past, or of solicitude about the future; scoffing at all who visited him in his usual sarcastic vein of mirth, with the same quickness of repartee and gross pleasantries as at any other period of his life. Cepeda, more criminal than either, ought to have shared the same fate; but the merit of having deserted his associates at such a critical moment, and with such decisive effect, saved him from immediate punishment. He was sent, however, as a prisoner to Spain, and died in confinement.^a

In the minute detail which the contemporary historians have given of the civil dissensions that raged in Peru, with little interruption during ten years, many circumstances occur so striking, and which indicate such an uncommon state of manners, as to merit particular attention.

Though the Spaniards who first invaded Peru were of the lowest order in society, and the greater part of those who afterward joined them were persons of desperate fortune, yet in all the bodies of troops brought into the field by the different leaders who contended for superiority, not one man acted as a hired soldier, that follows his standard for pay. Every adventurer in Peru considered himself as a conqueror, entitled, by his services, to an establishment in that country which had been acquired by his valour. In the contests between the rival chiefs, each chose his side as he was directed by his own judgment or affections. He joined his commander as a companion of his fortune, and disdained to degrade himself by receiving the wages of a mercenary. It was to their sword, not to pre-eminence in office, or

^a Zarate, lib. vii. c. 6—8. Gomara, c. 185, 186. Vega, p. 11. lib. v. c. 30, &c. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 86, &c. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 14, &c.

nobility of birth, that most of the leaders whom they followed were indebted for their elevation; and each of their adherents hoped, by the same means, to open a way for himself to the possession of power and wealth.*

Armies.

immensely
expensive;

But though the troops in Peru served without any regular pay, they were raised at immense expense. Among men accustomed to divide the spoils of an opulent country, the desire of obtaining wealth acquired incredible force. The ardour of pursuit augmented in proportion to the hope of success. Where all were intent on the same object, and under the dominion of the same passion, there was but one mode of gaining men, or of securing their attachment. Officers of name and influence, besides the promise of future establishments, received in hand large gratuities from the chief with whom they engaged. Gonzalo Pizarro, in order to raise a thousand men, advanced five hundred thousand pesos.* Gasca expended in levying the troops which he led against Pizarro nine hundred thousand pesos.† The distribution of property, bestowed as the reward of services, was still more exorbitant. Cepeda, as the recompense of his perfidy and address, in persuading the court of royal audience to give the sanction of its authority to the usurped jurisdiction of Pizarro, received a grant of lands which yielded an annual income of a hundred and fifty thousand pesos.‡ Hinojosa, who, by his early defection from Pizarro, and surrender of the fleet to Gasca, decided the fate of Peru, obtained a district of country affording two hundred thousand pesos of yearly value.¶ While such rewards were dealt out to the principal officers, with more than royal munificence, propor-

And im-
mense re-
wards to
individu-
als.

* Vega, p. 12. lib. iv. c. 38. 41.

† Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 54.

‡ Zurate, lib. vii. c. 10. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. v. c. 7.

§ Gomara, c. 164.

¶ Vega, p. 11. lib. vi. c. 3.

tional shares were conferred upon those of inferior rank.

Such a rapid change of fortune produced Their profusion and luxury. its natural effects. It gave birth to new wants, and new desires. Veterans, long accustomed to hardship and toil, acquired of a sudden a taste for profuse and inconsiderate dissipation, and indulged in all the excesses of military licentiousness. The riot of low debauchery occupied some; a relish for expensive luxuries spread among others.* The meanest soldier in Peru would have thought himself degraded by marching on foot; and at a time when the prices of horses in that country were exorbitant, each insisted on being furnished with one before he would take the field. But though less patient under the fatigue and hardships of service, they were ready to face danger and death with as much intrepidity as ever; and animated by the hope of new rewards, they never failed, on the day of battle, to display all their ancient valour.

Ferocity with which their contests were carried on; Together with their courage, they retained all the ferocity by which they were originally distinguished. Civil discord never raged with a more fell spirit than among the Spaniards in Peru. To all the passions which usually envenom contests among countrymen, avarice was added, and rendered their enmity more rancorous. Eagerness to seize the valuable forfeitures expected upon the death of every opponent, shut the door against mercy. To be wealthy, was of itself sufficient to expose a man to accusation, or to subject him to punishment. On the slightest suspicions, Pizarro condemned many of the most opulent inhabitants in Peru to death. Carvajal, without searching for any pretext to justify his cruelty, cut off many more. The number of those who suffered by the hands of the executioner, was not much

inferior to what fell in the field ;⁷ and the greater part was condemned without the formality of any legal trial.

And want
of faith.

The violence with which the contending parties treated their opponents was not accompanied with its usual attendants, attachment and fidelity to those with whom they acted. The ties of honour, which ought to be held sacred among soldiers, and the principle of integrity, interwoven as thoroughly in the Spanish character as in that of any nation, seem to have been equally forgotten. Even regard for decency, and the sense of shame, were totally lost. During their dissensions, there was hardly a Spaniard in Peru who did not abandon the party which he had originally espoused, betray the associates with whom he had united, and violate the engagements under which he had come. The viceroy Nugnez Vela was ruined by the treachery of Cepeda and the other judges of the royal audience, who were bound by the duties of their function to have supported his authority. The chief advisers and companions of Gonzalo Pizarro's revolt were the first to forsake him, and submit to his enemies. His fleet was given up to Gasca by the man whom he had singled out among his officers to intrust with that important command. On the day that was to decide his fate, an army of veterans, in sight of the enemy, threw down their arms without striking a blow, and deserted a leader who had often conducted them to victory. Instances of such general and avowed contempt of the principles and obligations which attach man to man, and bind them together in social union, rarely occur in history. It is only where men are far removed from the seat of government, where the restraints of law and order are little felt, where the prospect of gain is unbounded, and where immense wealth may cover the crimes by which it is acquired, that we

⁷ See Note XC.

can find any parallel to the levity, the rapaciousness, the perfidy and corruption prevalent among the Spaniards in Peru.

Gasca devises employment for his soldiers.

On the death of Pizarro, the malecontents in every corner of Peru laid down their arms, and tranquillity seemed to be perfectly re-established. But two very interesting objects still remained to occupy the president's attention. The one was to find immediately such employment for a multitude of turbulent and daring adventurers with which the country was filled, as might prevent them from exciting new commotions. The other, to bestow proper gratifications upon those to whose loyalty and valour he had been indebted for his success. The former of these was in some measure accomplished, by appointing Pedro de Valdivia to prosecute the conquest of Chili; and by empowering Diego Centeno to undertake the discovery of the vast regions bordering on the river De la Plata. The reputation of those leaders, together with the hopes of acquiring wealth, and of rising to consequence in some unexplored country, alluring many of the most indigent and desperate soldiers to follow their standards, drained off no inconsiderable portion of that mutinous spirit which Gasca dreaded.

His division of the country among his followers.

The latter was an affair of greater difficulty, and to be adjusted with a more attentive and delicate hand. The *repartimientos*, or allotments of lands and Indians which fell to be distributed, in consequence of the death or forfeiture of the former possessors, exceeded two millions of pesos of yearly rent.* Gasca, when now absolute master of this immense property, retained the same disinterested sentiments which he had originally professed, and refused to reserve the smallest portion of it for

* Vega, p. 11. lib. vi. c. 4.

himself. But the number of claimants was great; and whilst the vanity or avarice of every individual fixed the value of his own services, and estimated the recompense which he thought due to him, the pretensions of each were so extravagant, that it was impossible to satisfy all. Gasca listened to them one by one, with the most patient attention; and that he might have leisure to weigh the comparative merit of their several claims with accuracy, he retired, with the archbishop of Lima and a single secretary, to a village twelve leagues from Cuzco. There he spent several days in allotting to each a district of lands and number of Indians, in proportion to his idea of their past services and future importance. But that he might get beyond the reach of the fierce storm of clamour and rage which he foresaw would burst out on the publication of his decree, notwithstanding the impartial equity with which he had framed it, he set out for Lima, leaving the instrument of partition sealed up, with orders not to open it for some days after his departure.

Aug. 24.

The discontent it
excited.

The indignation excited by publishing the decree of partition was not less than Gasca had expected. Vanity, avarice, emulation, envy, shame, rage, and all the other passions which most vehemently agitate the minds of men when both their honour and their interest are deeply affected, conspired in adding to its violence. It broke out with all the fury of military insolence. Calumny, threats, and curses, were poured out openly upon the president. He was accused of ingratitude, of partiality, and of injustice. Among soldiers prompt to action, such seditious discourse would have been soon followed by deeds no less violent, and they already began to turn their eyes towards some discontented leaders, expecting them to stand forth in redress of their wrongs. By some

vigorous interpositions of government, a timely check was given to this mutinous spirit, and the danger of another civil war was averted for the present.*

1549.
Re-establishes order and government,

Gasca, however, perceiving that the flame was suppressed rather than extinguished, laboured with the utmost assiduity to soothe the malecontents, by bestowing large gratuities on some, by promising *repartimientos*, when they fell vacant, to others, and by caressing and flattering all. But that the public security might rest on a foundation more stable than their good affection, he endeavoured to strengthen the hands of his successors in office, by re-establishing the regular administration of justice in every part of the empire. He introduced order and simplicity into the mode of collecting the royal revenue. He issued regulations concerning the treatment of the Indians, well calculated to protect them from oppression, and to provide for their instruction in the principles of religion, without depriving the Spaniards of the benefit accruing from their labour. Having

1550.

now accomplished every object of his mission, Gasca, longing to return again to a private station, committed the government of Peru to the court of audience, and set out for Spain. As

*Feb. 1.
And sets out for Spain.

during the anarchy and turbulence of the four last years, there had been no remittance made of the royal revenue, he carried with him thirteen hundred thousand pesos of public money, which the economy and order of his administration enabled him to save, after paying all the expenses of the war.

His reception there.

He was received in his native country with universal admiration of his abilities, and of his virtue. Both were, indeed, highly conspicuous. Without army, or fleet, or public funds; with a train so simple, that only three thousand ducats were expended

* Zarate, lib. vii. c. 9. Gomara, c. 187. Vega, p. 11. lib. vii. c. 1, &c. Fernandez, p. 11. lib. 1. c. 1, &c. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 17, &c.

in equipping him, he set out to oppose a formidable rebellion. By his address and talents he supplied all those defects, and seemed to create instruments for executing his designs. He acquired such a naval force, as gave him the command of the sea. He raised a body of men able to cope with the veteran bands which gave law to Peru. He vanquished their leader, on whose arms victory had hitherto attended, and in place of anarchy and usurpation, he established the government of laws, and the authority of the rightful sovereign. But the praise bestowed on his abilities was exceeded by that which his virtue merited. After residing in a country where wealth presented allurements which had seduced every person who had hitherto possessed power there, he returned from that trying station with integrity, not only untainted but unsuspected. After distributing among his countrymen possessions of greater extent and value than had ever been in the disposal of a subject in any age or nation, he himself remained in his original state of poverty; and at the very time when he brought such a large recruit to the royal treasury, he was obliged to apply by petition for a small sum to discharge some petty debts which he had contracted during the course of his service.* Charles was not insensible to such disinterested merit. Gasca was received by him with the most distinguishing marks of esteem, and being promoted to the bishopric of Palencia, he passed the remainder of his days in the tranquillity of retirement, respected by his country, honoured by his sovereign, and beloved by all.

Notwithstanding all Gasca's wise regulations, the tranquillity of Peru was not of long continuance. In a country where the authority of government had been almost forgotten during the long prevalence of anarchy and misrule, where there were disappointed leaders

ripe for revolt, and seditious soldiers ready to follow them, it was not difficult to raise combustion. Several successive insurrections desolated the country for some years. But as those, though fierce, were only transient storms, excited rather by the ambition and turbulence of particular men, than by general or public motives, the detail of them is not the object of this history. These commotions in Peru, like every thing of extreme violence either in the natural or political body, were not of long duration, and by carrying off the corrupted humours which had given rise to the disorders, they contributed in the end to strengthen the society which at first they threatened to destroy. During their fierce contests, several of the first invaders of Peru, and many of those licentious adventurers whom the fame of their success had allured thither, fell by each other's hands. Each of the parties, as they alternately prevailed in the struggle, gradually cleared the country of a number of turbulent spirits, by executing, proscribing, or banishing their opponents. Men less enterprising, less desperate, and more accustomed to move in the path of sober and peaceable industry, settled in Peru; and the royal authority was gradually established as firmly there as in the other Spanish colonies.

NOTES

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Note I. p. 2.

THE number of the fish in the rivers of South America is so extraordinary, as to merit particular notice. "In the Maragnon (says P. Acugna) fish are so plentiful, that without any art, they may take them with the hands." p. 138. "In the Orinoco (says P. Gumilla), besides an infinite variety of other fish, tortoise or turtle abound in such numbers, that I cannot find words to express it. I doubt not but that such as read my account will accuse me of exaggeration: but I can affirm that it is as difficult to count them, as to count the sands on the banks of that river. One may judge of their number by the amazing consumption of them; for all the nations contiguous to the river, and even many who are at a distance, flock thither at the season of breeding, and not only find sustenance during that time, but carry off great numbers both of the turtles and of their eggs," &c. *Hist. de l'Orenoque*, ii. c. 22. p. 59. M. de la Condamine confirms their accounts, p. 159.

Note II. p. 2.

PISO describes two of these plants, the *Cururuape*, and the *Gua-jana-Timbo*. It is remarkable, that though they have this fatal effect upon fishes, they are so far from being noxious to the human species, that they are used in medicine with success. PISO, lib. iv. c. 88. Bancroft mentions another, the *Hiarree*, a small quantity of which is sufficient to inebriate all the fish to a considerable distance, so that in a few minutes, they float motionless on the surface of the water, and are taken with ease. *Nat. Hist. of Guiana*, p. 106.

Note III. p. 5.

REMARKABLE instances occur of the calamities which rude nations suffer by famine. Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, one of the

most gallant and virtuous of the Spanish adventurers, resided almost nine years among the savages of Florida. They were unacquainted with every species of agriculture. Their subsistence was poor and precarious. "They live chiefly (says he) upon roots of different plants, which they procure with great difficulty, wandering from place to place in search of them. Sometimes they kill game, sometimes they catch fish, but in such small quantities, that their hunger is so extreme as compels them to eat spiders, the eggs of ants, worms, lizards, serpents, a kind of unctuous earth, and I am persuaded, that if in this country there were any stones, they would swallow these. They preserve the bones of fishes and serpents, which they grind into powder, and eat. The only season when they do not suffer much from famine, is when a certain fruit, which he calls *Tunas*, is ripe. This is the same with the *Opuntia*, or prickly pear, of a reddish and yellow colour, with a sweet insipid taste. They are sometimes obliged to travel far from their usual place of residence, in order to find them." Naufragias, c. xviii. p. 20, 21, 22. In another place, he observes that they are frequently reduced to pass two or three days without food, c. xxiv. p. 27.

Note IV. p. 6.

M. FERMIN has given an accurate description of the two species of manioc, with an account of its culture, to which he has added some experiments, in order to ascertain the poisonous qualities of the juice extracted from that species which he calls the bitter cassava. Among the Spaniards, it is known by the name of *Yuca brava*. Descr. de Surin. tom. i. p. 66.

Note V. p. 7.

THE plantain is found in Asia and Africa, as well as in America. Oviedo contends, that it is not an indigenous plant of the New World, but was introduced into the island of Hispaniola, in the year 1516, by father Thomas de Berlanga, and that he transplanted it from the Canary Islands, whither the original slips had been brought from the East Indies. Oviedo. lib. viii. c. 1. But the opinion of Acosta and other naturalists, who reckon it an American plant, seems to be better founded. Acosta Hist. Nat. lib. iv. 21. It was cultivated by rude tribes in America, who had little intercourse with the Spaniards, and who were destitute of that ingenuity, which disposes men to borrow what is useful from foreign nations. Gumil. iii. 186. Wafer's Voyage, p. 87.

Note VI. p. 8.

It is remarkable, that Acosta, one of the most accurate and best informed writers concerning the West Indies, affirms, that maize, though cultivated in the continent, was not known in the islands, the inhabitants of which had none but cassada bread. Hist. Nat. lib. iv. c. 16. But P. Martyr, in the first book of his first Decad, which was written in the year 1493, upon the return of Columbus from his first voyage, expressly mentions maize as a plant which the islanders cultivated, and of which they made bread, p. 7. Gomara likewise asserts, that they were acquainted with the culture of maize. Histor. Gener. cap. 28. Oviedo describes maize without any intimation of its being a plant that was not natural to Hispaniola. Lib. vii. c. 1.

Note VII. p. 13.

NEW HOLLAND, a country which formerly was only known, has lately been visited by intelligent observers. It lies in a region of the globe where it must enjoy a very favourable climate, as it stretches from the 10th to the 38th degree of northern latitude. It is of great extent, and from its square form must be much more than equal to all Europe. The people who inhabit the various parts of it appear to be of one race. They are evidently ruder than most of the Americans, and have made still less progress in improvement and the arts of life. There is not the least appearance of cultivation in any part of this vast region. The inhabitants are extremely few, so that the country appears almost desolate. Their tribes are still more inconsiderable than those of America. They depend for subsistence almost entirely on fishing. They do not settle in one place, but roam about in quest of food. Both sexes go starknaked. Their habitations, utensils, &c. are more simple and rude than those of the Americans. Voyages, by Hawkesworth, iii. 622, &c. This, perhaps, is the country where man has been discovered in the earliest stage of his progress, and it exhibits a miserable specimen of his condition and powers in that uncultivated state. If this country shall be more fully explored by future navigators, the comparison of the manners of its inhabitants with those of the Americans will prove an instructive article in the history of the human species.

Note VIII. p. 14.

P. GABRIEL-MAREST, who travelled from his station among the Illinois to Machillimakinac, thus describes the face of the

country:—"We have marched twelve days without meeting a single human creature. Sometimes we found ourselves in vast meadows, of which we could not see the boundaries, through which there flowed many brooks and rivers, but without any path to conduct us. Sometimes we were obliged to open a passage across thick forests, through bushes, and underwood filled with briars and thorns. Sometimes we had to pass through deep marshes, in which we sunk up to the middle. After being fatigued through the day, we had the earth for our bed, or a few leaves, exposed to the wind, the rain, and all the injuries of the air." Lettr. Edifiantes, ii. 360. Dr. Brickell, in an excursion from North Carolina towards the mountains, A. D. 1730, travelled fifteen days without meeting with a human creature, Nat. Hist. of North Carolina, 389. Diego de Ordaz, in attempting to make a settlement in South America, A. D. 1532, marched fifty days through a country without one inhabitant. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. 1. c. 11.

Note IX. p. 14.

I STRONGLY suspect that a community of goods, and an undivided store, are known only among the rudest tribes of hunters; and that as soon as any species of agriculture or regular industry is known, the idea of an exclusive right of property to the fruits of them is introduced. I am confirmed in this opinion by accounts which I have received concerning the state of property among the Indians in very different regions of America. "The idea of the natives of Brazil concerning property is, that if any person cultivate a field, he alone ought to enjoy the produce of it, and no other has a title to pretend to it. If an individual or family go a hunting or fishing, what is caught belongs to the individual or to the family, and they communicate no part of it to any but to their cazique, or to such of their kindred as happen to be indisposed. If any person in the village come to their hut, he may sit down freely, and eat without asking liberty. But this is the consequence of their general principle of hospitality; for I never observed any partition of the increase of their fields, or the produce of the chase, which I could consider as the result of any idea concerning a community of goods. On the contrary, they are so much attached to what they deem to be their property, that it would be extremely dangerous to encroach upon it. As far as I have seen or can learn, there is not one tribe of Indians in South America, among whom the community of goods which has been so highly extolled is stance in the government of the Jesuits, most ans of Paraguay, was the community of

goods which those fathers introduced. This was repugnant to the original ideas of the Indians. They were acquainted with the rights of private exclusive property, and they submitted with impatience to regulations which destroyed them." M. le Cheval. de Pinto, MS. *penes me*. "Actual possession (says a missionary who resided several years among the Indians of the Five Nations) gives a right to the soil, but whenever a possessor sees fit to quit it, another has as good right to take it as he who left it. This law, or custom, respects not only the particular spot on which he erects his house, but also his planting-ground. If a man has prepared a particular spot of ground, on which he designs in future to build or plant, no man has a right to incommode him, much less to the fruit of his labours, until it appears that he voluntarily gives up his views. But I never heard of any formal conveyance from one Indian to another in their natural state. The limits of every canton are circumscribed; that is, they are allowed to hunt as far as such a river on this hand, and such a mountain on the other. This area is occupied and improved by individuals and their families. Individuals, not the community, have the use and profit of their own labours, or success in hunting." MS. of Mr. Gideon Hawley, *penes me*.

Note X. p. 16.

THIS difference of temper between the Americans and negroes is so remarkable, that it is a proverbial saying in the French islands, "*Regarder un sauvage de travers, c'est le battre; le battre, c'est le tuer; battre un negre, c'est le nourrir.*" Tertre, ii. 490.

Note XI. p. 17.

THE description of the political state of the people of Cinaloa perfectly resembles that of the inhabitants of North America. "They have neither laws nor kings (says a missionary who resided long among them) to punish any crime. Nor is there among them any species of authority, or political government, to restrain them in any part of their conduct. It is true, that they acknowledge certain caziques, who are heads of their families or villages, but their authority appears chiefly in war, and the expeditions against their enemies. This authority the caziques obtain not by hereditary right, but by their valour in war, or by the power and number of their families and relations. Sometimes they owe their pre-eminence to their eloquence in displaying their own exploits." Ribas, *Histor. de las Triunph. &c.* p. 11. The state of the Chiquitos in South America is nearly the same. "They have no regular form of government, or civil life, but in matters of public concern they

listen to the advice of their old men, and usually follow it. The dignity of casique is not hereditary, but conferred according to merit, as the reward of valour in war. The union among them is imperfect. Their society resembles a republic without any head, in which every man is master of himself, and upon the least disgust, separates from those with whom he seemed to be connected." *Relacion Historica de las Misiones de los Chiquitos*, por P. Juan Patr. Fernandez, p. 32, 33. Thus, under very different climates, when nations are in a similar state of society, their institutions and civil government assume the same form.

Note XII. p. 29.

"I HAVE known the Indians (says a person well acquainted with their mode of life) to go a thousand miles for the purpose of revenge, in pathless woods, over hills and mountains, through huge cane-swamps, exposed to the extremities of heat and cold, the vicissitude of seasons, to hunger and thirst. Such is their over-boiling revengeful temper, that they utterly condemn all those things as imaginary trifles, if they are so happy as to get the scalp of the murderer, or enemy, to satisfy the craving ghosts of their deceased relations." *Adair's Hist. of Amer. Indians*, p. 150.

Note XIII. p. 29

IN the account of the great war between the Algonquins and Iroquois, the achievements of Piskaret, a famous chief of the Algonquins, performed mostly by himself alone, or with one or two companions, make a capital figure. *De la Potherie*, i. 297, &c. *Colden's Hist. of Five Nations*, 125, &c.

Note XIV. p. 31.

THE life of an unfortunate leader is often in danger, and he is always degraded from the rank which he had acquired by his former exploits. *Adair*, p. 388.

Note XV. p. 31.

As the ideas of the North Americans, with respect to the mode of carrying on war, are generally known, I have founded my observations chiefly upon the testimony of the authors who describe them. But the same maxims took place among other nations in the New World. A judicious missionary has given a view of the military operations of the people of Gran Chaco, in South America,

perfectly similar to those of the Iroquois. "They are much addicted to war (says he), which they carry on frequently among themselves, but perpetually against the Spaniards. But they may rather be called thieves than soldiers, for they never make head against the Spaniards, unless when they can assault them by stealth, or have guarded against any mischance by spies, who may be called indefatigable; they will watch the settlements of the Spaniards for one, two, or three years, observing by night every thing that passes with the utmost solicitude, whether they may expect resistance or not, and until they are perfectly secure of the event, they will not venture upon an attack; so that when they do give the assault, they are certain of success, and free from all danger. These spies, in order that they may not be observed, will creep on all-four like cats in the night; but if they are discovered, make their escape with much dexterity. But, although they never choose to face the Spaniards, if they be surrounded in any place whence they cannot escape, they will fight with desperate valour, and sell their lives very dear." Descript. del Gran Chaco, p. 78.

Note XVI. p. 32.

LERY, who was an eye-witness of the proceedings of the *Toupanbos*, a Brazilian tribe, in a war against a powerful nation of their enemies, describes their courage and ferocity in very striking terms. Ego cum Gallo altero, paulo curiosius, magno nostro periculo (si enim ab hostibus capti aut lesi fuissetus, devorationi fuissetus devoti), barbaros nostros in militiam euntes comitari volui. Hi, numero 4000 capita, cum hostibus ad litus decertarunt, tanta ferocitate, ut vel rabidos et furiosos quosque superarent. Cum primum hostes conspexere, in magnos atque editos ululatus perruperunt. Hæc gens adeo fera est et truculenta, ut tantisper dum virum vel tantillum restat, continuo dimittent, fugamque nunquam capessant. Quod a natura illis inditum esse reor. Testor interea me, qui non semel, tum peditum tum equitum copias ingentes, in aciem instructas hic conspexi, tanta nunquam voluptate videndis peditum legionibus armis fulgentibus, quanta tum pugnantibus istis percussus fuisset. Lery Hist. Navigat. in Brasil. ap. de Bry, iii. 207 — 209.

Note XVII. p. 33.

It was originally the practice of the Americans, as well as of other savage nations, to cut off the heads of the enemies whom they slew, and to carry them away as trophies. But, as they found these cumbersome in their retreat, which they always make very

rapidly, and often through a vast extent of country, they became satisfied with tearing off their scalps. This custom, though most prevalent in North America, was not unknown among the southern tribes. Lobano, p. 79.

Note XVIII. p. 37.

THE terms of the war-song seem to be dictated by the same fierce spirit of revenge. "I go to war to revenge the death of my brothers; I shall kill; I shall exterminate; I shall burn my enemies; I shall bring away slaves; I shall devour their heart, dry their flesh, drink their blood; I shall tear off their scalps, and make cups of their skulls." Bossu's Travels through Louisiana, vol. i. p. 102. I am informed, by persons on whose testimony I can rely, that as the number of people in the Indian tribes has decreased so much, almost none of their prisoners are now put to death. It is considered as better policy to spare and to adopt them. Those dreadful scenes which I have described occur now so rarely, that missionaries and traders who have resided long among the Indians, never were witnesses to them.

Note XIX. p. 37.

ALL the travellers who have visited the most uncivilized of the American tribes, agree in this. It is confirmed by two remarkable circumstances, which occurred in the conquest of different provinces. In the expedition of Narvaez into Florida in the year 1528, the Spaniards were reduced to such extreme distress by famine, that, in order to preserve their own lives, they eat such of their companions as happened to die. This appeared so shocking to the natives, who were accustomed to devour none but prisoners, that it filled them with horror and indignation against the Spaniards. Torquemada Monarch. Ind. ii. p. 534. Naufragios de Alv. Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, c. xiv. p. 15. During the siege of Mexico, though the Mexicans devoured with greediness the Spaniards and Tlascalans, whom they took prisoners, the utmost rigour of the famine which they suffered could not induce them to touch the dead bodies of their own countrymen. Bern. Diaz. del Castillo Conquist. de la N. Espagna, p. 156.

Note XX. p. 38.

MANY singular circumstances concerning the treatment of prisoners among the people of Brazil, are contained in the narrative of Stadius, a German officer in the service of the Portuguese, pub-

lished in the year 1556. He was taken prisoner by the *Toupinambos*, and remained in captivity nine years. He was often present at those horrid festivals which he describes, and was destined himself to the same cruel fate with other prisoners. But he saved his life by his extraordinary efforts of courage and address. De Bry, iii. p. 34, &c. M. de Lery, who accompanied M. de Villagagnon in his expedition to Brazil, in the year 1556, and who resided some time in that country, agrees with Stadius in every circumstance of importance. He was frequently an eye-witness of the manner in which the Brazilians treated their prisoners. De Bry, iii. 210. Several striking particulars omitted by them, are mentioned by a Portuguese author. Purch. Pilgr. iv. 1291, &c.

Note XXI. p. 41.

THOUGH I have followed that opinion concerning the apathy of the Americans, which appeared to me most rational, and supported by the authority of the most respectable authors, other theories have been formed with regard to it, by writers of great eminence. D. Ant. Ulloa, in a late work, contends that the texture of the skin and bodily habit of the Americans is such, that they are less sensible of pain than the rest of mankind. He produces several proofs of this, from the manner in which they endure the most cruel surgical operations, &c. *Noticias Americanas*, p. 313, 311. The same observation has been made by surgeons in Brazil. An Indian, they say, never complains under pain, and will bear the amputation of a leg or arm without uttering a single groan. MS. *poneo me*.

Note XXII. p. 43.

THIS is an idea natural to all rude nations. Among the Romans, in the early periods of their commonwealth it was a maxim that a prisoner, "tum decessisse videtur cum captus est." *Digest. lib. xlix. tit. 15. c. 18.* And afterward, when the progress of refinement rendered them more indulgent with respect to this article, they were obliged to employ two fictions of law to secure the property, and permit the return of a captive, the one by the *Lex Cornelia*, and the other by the *Jus Posthumii*, Henec. *Elem. Jur. Civ. sec. ord. Pand. n. p. 294.* Among the negroes the same ideas prevail. No ransom was ever accepted for a prisoner. As soon as one is taken in war, he is reputed to be dead; and he is so in effect to his country and his family. *Voy. du Cheval. des Marchais*, i. p. 369.

Note XXIII. p. 44.

THE people of Chili, the most gallant and high-spirited of all

the Americans, are the only exception to this observation. They attack their enemies in the open field ; their troops are ranged in regular order ; their battalions advance to the charge not only with courage, but with discipline. The North Americans, though many of them have substituted the European fire-arms in place of their own bows and arrows, still adhere to their ancient maxims of war, and carry it on according to their own peculiar system. But the Chileses nearly resemble the warlike nations of Europe and Asia in their military operations. Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church. Coll. iii. p. 71. Lozano's Hist. Parag. i. 144, 145.

Note XXIV. p. 46.

HERRERA gives a remarkable proof of this. In Yucatan, the men are so solicitous about their dress, that they carry about with them mirrors, probably made of stone, like those of the Mexicans, Dec. iv. lib. iii. c. 8, in which they delight to view themselves ; but the women never use them. Dec. iv. lib. x. c. 3. He takes notice that among the fierce tribe of the *Panches*, in the new kingdom of Granada, none but distinguished warriors are permitted either to pierce their lips and to wear green stones in them, or to adorn their heads with plumes of feathers. Dec. vii. lib. ix. c. 4. In some provinces of Peru, though that empire had made considerable progress in civilization, the state of women was little improved. All the toil of cultivation and domestic work was devolved upon them, and they were not permitted to wear bracelets, or other ornaments, with which the men were fond of decking themselves. Zarate Hist. de Peru, i. p. 15, 16.

Note XXV. p. 47.

I HAVE ventured to call this mode of anointing and painting their bodies, the *dress* of the Americans. This is agreeable to their own idiom. As they never stir abroad if they are not completely anointed, they excuse themselves when in this situation, by saying, that they cannot appear because they are naked. Gumilla Hist. de l'Orenoque, i. 191.

Note XXVI. p. 48.

SOME tribes in the forest of Cinaloa, on the gulf of California, seem to be among the rudest people of America united in the social state. They neither cultivate nor sow ; they have no houses in which they reside. Those in the inland country subsist by hunting ; those on the sea-coast chiefly by fishing. Both depend upon the spontaneous productions of the earth, fruits, plants, and roots of

various kinds. In the rainy season, as they have no habitations to afford them shelter, they gather bundles of reeds, or strong grass, and binding them together at one end, they open them at the other, and fitting them to their heads, they are covered as with a large cap, which like a pent-house throws off the rain, and will keep them dry for several hours. During the warm season, they form a shed with the branches of trees, which protects them from the sultry rays of the sun. When exposed to cold they make large fires, round which they sleep in the open air. *Historia de los Triunphos de Nuestra Santa Fè entre Gentes las mas barbaras*, &c. por P. And. Perez de Ribas, p. 7, &c.

Note XXVII. p. 49.

THESE houses resemble barns. "We have measured some which were a hundred and fifty paces long, and twenty paces broad. Above a hundred persons resided in some of them" *Wilson's Account of Guiana*. *Purch. Pilgr.* vol. iv. p. 1263. *Ibid.* 1291. "The Indian houses," says Mr. Barreire, "have a most wretched appearance, and are a striking image of the rudeness of early times. Their huts are commonly built on some rising ground, or on the banks of a river huddled sometimes together, sometimes straggling, and always without any order. Their aspect is melancholy and disagreeable. One sees nothing but what is hideous and savage. The uncultivated fields have no gaiety. The silence which reigns there, unless when interrupted by the disagreeable notes of birds, or cries of wild beasts, is extremely dismal." *Relat. de la France Equin.* p. 146.

Note XXVIII. p. 50.

SOME tribe in South America can send their arrows to a great distance, and with considerable force, without the aid of the bow. They make use of a hollow reed, about nine feet long, and an inch thick, which is called a *Sarbacane*. In it they lodge a small arrow, with some unspun cotton wound about its great end; this confines the air, so that they can blow it with astonishing rapidity, and a sure aim, to the distance of above a hundred paces. These small arrows are always poisoned. *Fermin. Descr. de Surin.* i. 55. *Bancroft's Hist. of Guiana*, p. 281, &c. The *Sarbacane* is much used in some parts of the East Indies.

Note XXIX. p. 50.

I MIGHT produce many instances of this, but shall satisfy myself with one, taken from the Eskimaux. "Their greatest ingenuity

(says Mr. Ellis) is shewn in the structure of their bows, made commonly of three pieces of wood, each making part of the same arch, very nicely and exactly joined together. They are commonly of fir or larch; and as this wants strength and elasticity, they supply both by bracing the back of their bow, with a kind of thread, or line, made of the sinews of their deer, and the bowstring of the same materials. To make them draw more stiffly, they dip them into water, which causes both the back of the bow and the string to contract, and consequently gives it the greater force; and as they practise from their youth, they shoot with very great dexterity." Voyage to Hudson's Bay, p. 138.

Note XXX. p. 51.

NECESSITY is the great prompter and guide of mankind in their inventions. There is, however, such inequality in some parts of their progress, and some nations get so far the start of others in circumstances nearly similar, that we must ascribe this to some events in their story, or to some peculiarity in their situation, with which we are unacquainted. The people in the island of Otaheite, lately discovered in the South sea, far excel most of the Americans in the knowledge and practice of the arts of ingenuity, and yet they had not invented any method of boiling water; and having no vessel that could bear the fire, they had no more idea that water could be made hot, than that it could be made solid. Voyages by Hawkesworth, i. 466. 484.

Note XXXI. p. 51.

ONE of these boats, which could carry nine men, weighed only sixty pounds. Gosnol. Relat. des Voy. a la Virgin. Rec. de Voy. au Nord, tom. v. p. 403.

Note XXXII. p. 53.

A REMARKABLE proof of this is produced by Ulloa. In weaving hammocks, coverlets, and other coarse cloths, which they are accustomed to manufacture, their industry has discovered no more expeditious method than to take up thread after thread, and after counting and sorting them each time, to pass the woof between them, so that in finishing a small piece of those stuffs, they frequently spend more than two years. Voyage, i. 336. Bancroft gives the same description of the Indians of Guiana, p. 255. According to

Adair, the ingenuity and dispatch of the North American Indians are not greater, p. 422. From one of the engravings of the Mexican paintings in Purchas, vol. iii. p. 1106. I think it probable that the people of Mexico were acquainted with any better or more expeditious mode of weaving. A loom was an invention beyond the ingenuity of the most improved Americans. In all their works they advance so slowly, that one of their artists is two months at a tobacco-pipe with his knife before he finishes it. Adair, p. 423.

Note XXXIII. p. 55.

THE article of religion in P. Lafitau's *Mœurs des Sauvages*, extends to three hundred and forty-seven tedious pages in quarto.

Note XXXIV. p. 56.

I HAVE referred the reader to several of the authors who describe the most uncivilized nations in America. Their testimony is uniform. That of P. Ribas concerning the people of Cinaloa, coincides with the rest. "I was extremely attentive (says he), during the years I resided among them, to ascertain whether they were to be considered as idolaters; and it may be affirmed with the most perfect exactness, that though among some of them there may be traces of idolatry, yet others have not the least knowledge of God, or even of any false deity, nor pay any formal adoration to the Supreme Being, who exercises dominion over the world; nor have they any conception of the providence of a Creator or Governor, from whom they expect in the next life the reward of their good, or the punishment of their evil deeds. Neither do they publicly join in any act of divine worship." Ribas *Triumphos* &c. p. 16.

Note XXXV. p. 57.

THE people of Brazil were so much affrighted by thunder, which is frequent and awful in their country, as well as in other parts of the torrid zone, that it was not only the object of religious reverence; but the most expressive name in their language for the Deity, was *Toupan*, the same by which they distinguished thunder. Pison de Medec. Brasil, p. 8. Nieuhoff. *Church*, Coll. ii. p. 132.

Note XXXVI. p. 63.

By the account which M. Dumont, an eye-witness, gives of the funeral of the great chief of the Natchez, it appears, that the feel-

ings of the persons who suffered on that occasion were very different. Some solicited the honour with eagerness; others laboured to avoid their doom, and several saved their lives by flying to the woods. As the Indian Brahmins give an intoxicating draught to the women, who are to be burnt together with the bodies of their husbands, which renders them insensible of their approaching fate, the Natchez obliged their victims to swallow several large pills of tobacco, which produce a similar effect. Mem. de Louis. i. 227.

Note XXXVII. p. 69.

ON some occasions, particularly in dances instituted for the recovery of persons who are indisposed, they are extremely licentious and indecent. De la Potherie Hist. &c. ii. p. 42. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. p. 319. But the nature of their dances is commonly such as I have described.

Note XXXVIII. p. 71.

THE *Othomacoas*, a tribe seated on the banks of the Orinoco, employ for the same purpose a composition, which they call *Yupa*. It is formed of the seeds of an unknown plant reduced to powder, and certain shells burnt and pulverised. The effects of this when drawn up into the nostrils, are so violent, that they resemble madness rather than intoxication. Gumilla, i. 286.

Note XXXIX. p. 73.

THOUGH this observation holds true among the greater part of the southern tribes, there are some in which the intemperance of the women is as excessive as that of the men. Bancroft's Nat. Hist. of Guiana, p. 275.

Note XL. p. 77.

EVEN in the most intelligent writers concerning the manners of the Americans, one meets with inconsistent and inexplicable circumstances. The Jesuit Charlevoix, who, in consequence of the controversy between his order and that of the Franciscans, with respect to the talents and abilities of the North Americans, is disposed to represent their intellectual as well as moral qualities in the most favourable light, asserts, that they are engaged in continual negotiations with their neighbours, and conduct these with the most refined address. At the same time he adds, "that it behoves their envoys

plenipotentiaries to exert their abilities and eloquence, for if the terms which they offer are not accepted of, they had need to stand on their guard. It frequently happens, that a blow with the hatchet is the only return given to their propositions. The envoy is not out of danger, even if he is so fortunate as to avoid the stroke : he may expect to be pursued, and if taken, to be burnt." Hist. N. Fr. iii. 251. What occurs, vol. ii. p. 277, concerning the manner in which the Tlascalans treated the ambassadors from Zempoalla, corresponds with the fact related by Charlevoix. Men capable of such acts of violence, seem to be unacquainted with the first principles upon which the intercourse between nations is founded ; and instead of the perpetual negotiations which Charlevoix mentions, it seems almost impossible that there should be any correspondence whatever among them.

Note XLI. p. 79.

It is a remark of Tacitus concerning the Germans, " Gaudent muneribus, sed nec data imputant, nec acceptis obligantur." C. 21. An author who had a good opportunity of observing the principle which leads savages neither to express gratitude for favours which they had received, nor to expect any return for such as they bestowed, thus explains their ideas : " If, say they, you give me this, it is because you have no need of it yourself ; and as for me, I never part with that which I think necessary to me." *Memoir sur le Galibis* ; Hist. des Plantes de la Guiane Française par M. Aublet, tom. ii. p. 110.

Note XLII. p. 90.

AND. BERNALDES, the contemporary and friend of Columbus, has preserved some circumstances concerning the bravery of the Caribbees, which are not mentioned by Don Ferdinand Columbus, or the other historians of that period, whose works have been published. A Caribbean canoe, with four men, two women, and a boy, fell in unexpectedly with the fleet of Columbus in his second voyage, as it was steering through their islands. At first they were struck almost stupid with astonishment at such a strange spectacle, and hardly moved from the spot for above an hour. A Spanish bark, with twenty-five men, advanced towards them, and the fleet gradually surrounded them, so as to cut off their communication with the shore. " When they saw that it was impossible to escape (says the historian), they seized their arms with undaunted resolution, and began the attack. I use the expression, *with undaunted resolution*, for they were few, and beheld a vast number ready to assault them.

They wounded several of the Spaniards, although they had targets, as well as other defensive armour ; and even after their canoe was overset, it was with no little difficulty and danger that part of them were taken, as they continued to defend themselves, and to use their bows with great dexterity while swimming in the sea." Hist. de D. Fern. y Ysab. MSS. c. 119.

. Note XLIII. p. 90.

A PROBABLE conjecture may be formed with respect to the cause of this distinction in character between the Caribbees and the inhabitants of the larger islands. The former appear manifestly to be a separate race. Their language is totally different from that of their neighbours in the large islands. They themselves have a tradition, that their ancestors came originally from some part of the continent, and having conquered and exterminated the ancient inhabitants, took possession of their lands, and of their women. Rochefort, 384. Tertre, 360. Hence they call themselves *Banarce*, which signifies a man come from beyond sea. Labat. vi. 131. Accordingly, the Caribbees still use two distinct languages, one peculiar to the men, and the other to the women. Tertre, 361. The language of the men has nothing common with that spoken in the large islands. The dialect of the women considerably resembles it. Labat. 129. This strongly confirms the tradition which I have mentioned. The Caribbees themselves imagine, that they were a colony from the *Gallibs*, a powerful nation of Guiana, in South America. Tertre, 361. Rochefort, 348. But as their fierce manners approach nearer to those of the people in the northern continent, than to those of the natives of South America ; and as their language has likewise some affinity to that spoken in Florida, their origin should be deduced rather from the former than from the latter. Labat. 128, &c. Herrera, dec. i. lib. ix. c. 4. In their wars, they still observe their ancient practice of destroying all the males, and preserving the women either for servitude or for breeding.

Note XLIV. p. 92.

OUR knowledge of the events which happened in the conquest of New Spain, is derived from sources of information more original and authentic than that of any transaction in the history of America. The letters of Cortes to the emperor Charles V. are an historical monument, not only first in order of time, but of the greatest authenticity and value. As Cortes early assumed a command independent of Velasquez, it became necessary to convey such an account of his operations to Madrid, as might procure him the approbation of his sovereign.

The first of his dispatches has never been made public. It was sent from Vera Cruz, July 16th, 1519. As I imagined that it might not reach the emperor, until he arrived in Germany, for which he set out early in the year 1520, in order to receive the imperial crown; I made diligent search for a copy of this dispatch, both in Spain and in Germany, but without success. This, however, is of less consequence, as it could not contain any thing very material, being written so soon after Cortes arrived in New Spain. But, in searching for the letter from Cortes, a copy of one from the colony of Vera Cruz to the emperor has been discovered in the imperial library at Vienna. Of this I have given some account in its proper place, p. 288 of this volume. The second dispatch, dated October 30th, 1520, was published at Seville, A. D. 1522, and the third and fourth soon after they were received. A Latin translation of them appeared in Germany, A. D. 1532. Ramusio soon after made them more generally known, by inserting them in his valuable collection. They contain a regular and minute history of the expedition, with many curious particulars concerning the policy and manners of the Mexicans. The work does honour to Cortes; the style is simple and perspicuous; but as it was manifestly his interest to represent his own actions in the fairest light, his victories are probably exaggerated, his losses diminished, and his acts of rigour and violence softened.

The next in order is the *Cronica de la Nueva Espagna*, by Francisco Lopez de Gomara, published A. D. 1554. Gomara's historical merit is considerable. His mode of narration is clear, flowing, always agreeable, and sometimes elegant. But he is frequently inaccurate and credulous; and as he was the domestic chaplain of Cortes, after his return from New Spain, and probably composed his work at his desire, it is manifest that he labours to magnify the merit of his hero, and to conceal or extenuate such transactions as were unfavourable to his character. Of this Herrera accuses him in one instance, Dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 2, and it is not once only that this is conspicuous. He writes, however, with so much freedom concerning several measures of the Spanish court, that the copies both of his *Historia de las Indias*, and of his *Cronica*, were called in by a decree of the council of the Indies, and they were long considered as prohibited books in Spain; it is only of late that licence to print them has been granted. *Pincelo Biblioth.* 589.

The Chronicle of Gomara induced Bernal Diaz del Castillo to compose his *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva Espagna*. He had been an adventurer in each of the expeditions to New Spain, and was the companion of Cortes in all his battles and perils. When he found that neither he himself, nor many of his fellow-soldiers, were once mentioned by Gomara, but that the

fame of their exploits was ascribed to Cortes, the gallant veteran laid hold of his pen with indignation, and composed his true history. It contains a prolix, minute, confused narrative of all Cortes's operations, in such a rude, vulgar style, as might be expected from an illiterate soldier. But as he relates transactions of which he was witness, and in which he performed a considerable part, his account bears all the marks of authenticity, and is accompanied with such a pleasant naïveté, with such interesting details, with such amusing vanity, and yet so pardonable in an old soldier, who had been (as he boasts) in a hundred and nineteen battles, as renders his book one of the most singular that is to be found in any language.

Pet. Martyr ab Angleria, in a treatise *De Insulis nuper inventis*, added to his *Decades de Rebus Oceanicis et Novo Orbe*, gives some account of Cortes's expedition. But he proceeds no farther than to relate what happened after his first landing. This work, which is brief and slight, seems to contain the information transmitted by Cortes in his first dispatches, embellished with several particulars communicated to the author by the officers who brought the letters from Cortes.

But the book to which the greater part of modern historians have had recourse for information concerning the conquest of New Spain, is *Historia de la Conquista de Mexico*, por D. Antonio de Solis, first published A. D. 1684. I know no author, in any language, whose literary fame has risen so far beyond his real merit. De Solis is reckoned by his countrymen one of the purest writers in the Castilian tongue; and if a foreigner may venture to give his opinion concerning a matter of which Spaniards alone are qualified to judge, he is entitled to that praise. But though his language be correct, his taste in composition is far from being just. His periods are so much laboured, as to be often stiff, and sometimes tumid; the figures which he employs by way of ornament are frequently trite or improper, and his observations superficial. These blemishes, however, might easily be overlooked, if he were not defective with respect to all the great qualities of an historian. Destitute of that patient industry in research which conducts to the knowledge of truth; a stranger to that impartiality which weighs evidence with cool attention; and ever eager to establish his favourite system of exalting the character of Cortes into that of a perfect hero, exempt from error, and adorned with every virtue; he is less solicitous to discover what was true, than to relate what might appear splendid. When he attempts any critical discussion, his reasonings are fallacious, and founded upon an imperfect view of facts. Though he sometimes quotes the *dispatches* of Cortes, he seems not to have consulted them; and though he sets out with

some censure on Gomara, he frequently prefers his authority—the most doubtful of any—to that of the other contemporary historians.

But of all the Spanish writers, Herrera furnishes the fullest and most accurate information concerning the conquest of Mexico, as well as every other transaction of America. The industry and attention with which he consulted not only the books, but the original papers and public records, which tended to throw any light upon the subject of his inquiries, were so great, and he usually judges of the evidence before him with so much impartiality and candour, that his Decads may be ranked among the most judicious and useful historical collections. If, by attempting to relate the various occurrences in the New World in a strict chronological order, the arrangements of events in his work had not been rendered so perplexed, disconnected, and obscure, that it is an unpleasant task to collect from different parts of his book, and piece together the detached shreds of a story, he might justly have been ranked among the most eminent historians of his country. He gives an account of the materials from which he composed his work, Dec. vi. lib. iii. c. 19.

Note XLV. p. 94.

CORTES purposed to have gone in the train of Ovando when he set out for his government in the year 1502, but was detained by an accident. As he was attempting in a dark night to scramble up to the window of a lady's bedchamber, with whom he carried on an intrigue, an old wall, on the top of which he had mounted, gave way, and he was so much bruised by the fall as to be unfit for the voyage. Gomara, *Cronica de la Nueva Espagna*, cap. 1.

Note XLVI. p. 96.

CORTES had two thousand pesos in the hands of Andrew Duero, and he borrowed four thousand. These sums are about equal in value to fifteen hundred pounds sterling; but as the price of every thing was extremely high in America, they made but a scanty stock when applied towards the equipment of a military expedition. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 2. B. Diaz, c. 20.

Note XLVII. p. 100.

THE names of those gallant officers, which will often occur in the subsequent story, were Juan Velasquez de Leon, Alonso Hernandez Portocarrero, Francisco de Montejo, Christoval de Olid, Juan de Escalante, Francisco de Morla, Pedro de Alvarado,

Francisco de Salceda, Juan de Escobar, Gines de Nortes. Cortes himself commanded the capitana, or admiral. Francisco de Orozco, an officer formed in the wars of Italy, had the command of the artillery. The experienced Alaminos acted as chief pilot.

Note XLVIII. p. 101.

IN those different conflicts, the Spaniards lost only two men, but had a considerable number wounded. Though there be no occasion for recourse to any supernatural cause to account either for the greatness of their victories, or the smallness of their loss, the Spanish historians fail not to ascribe both to the patronage of St. Jago, the tutelar saint of their country, who, as they relate, fought at the head of their countrymen, and by his prowess gave a turn to the fate of the battle. Gomara is the first who mentions this apparition of St. James. It is amusing to observe the embarrassment of B. Diaz del Castillo, occasioned by the struggle between his superstition and his veracity. The former disposed him to believe this miracle, the latter restrained him from attesting it. "I acknowledge," says he, "that all our exploits and victories are owing to our Lord Jesus Christ, and that in this battle there was such a number of Indians to every one of us, that if each had thrown a handful of earth they might have buried us, if by the great mercy of God we had not been protected. It may be that the person whom Gomara mentions as having appeared on a mottled gray horse, was the glorious apostle Signor San Jago, or Signor San Pedro, and that I, as being a sinner, was not worthy to see him. This I know, that I saw Francisca de Morla on such a horse, but as an unworthy transgressor, did not deserve to see any of the holy apostles. It may have been the will of God, that it was so as Gomara relates, but until I read his Chronicle I never heard among any of the conquerors that such a thing had happened." Cap. 34.

*Note XLIX. p. 107.

SEVERAL Spanish historians relate this occurrence in such terms as if they wished it should be believed, that the Indians, loaded with the presents, had carried them from the capital in the same short space of time that the couriers performed that journey. This is incredible, and Gomara mentions a circumstance which shows, that nothing extraordinary happened on this occasion. This rich present had been prepared for Grijalva, when he touched at the same place some months before, and was now ready to be delivered, as soon as Montezuma sent orders for that purpose. Gomara Chron. c. xxvii. p. 28.

According to B. Diaz del Castillo, the value of the silver-plate representing the moon, was alone above twenty thousand pesos, about five thousand pounds sterling.

Note L. p. 112.

THIS private traffic was directly contrary to the instructions of Velasquez, who enjoined, that whatever was acquired by trade should be thrown into the common stock. But it appears, that the soldiers had each a private assortment of toys, and other goods proper for the Indian trade, and Cortes gained their favour by encouraging this underhand barter. B. Diaz, c. 41.

Note LI. p. 123.

GOMARA has published a catalogue of the various articles of which this present consisted. Cron. c. 19. P. Martyr ab Angleria, who saw them after they were brought to Spain, and who seems to have examined them with great attention, gives a description of each, which is curious, as it conveys some idea of the progress which the Mexicans had made in several arts of elegance. De Insulis nuper inventis Liber. p. 351, &c

Note LII. p. 128.

THERE IS NO circumstance in the history of the conquest of America which is more questionable than the account of the numerous armies brought into the field against the Spaniards. As the war with the republic of Tlascala, though of short duration, was one of the most considerable which the Spaniards waged in America, the account given of the Tlascalan armies merits some attention. The only authentic information concerning this is derived from three authors. Cortes, in his second dispatch to the emperor, dated at Segura de la Frontera, October 20, 1520, thus estimates the number of their troops; in the first battle 6000; in the second battle 100,000; in the third battle 150,000. Relat. ap. Ramus. iii. 228. Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who was an eye-witness, and engaged in all the actions of this war, thus reckons their numbers; in the first battle 3000, p. 43; in the second battle 6000, *ibid.*; in the third battle 50,000, p. 45. Gomara, who was Cortes's chaplain after his return to Spain, and published his *Cronica* in 1552, follows the computation of Cortes, except in the second battle, where he reckons the Tlascalans at 80,000, p. 49. It was manifestly the interest of Cortes to magnify his own dangers and exploits. For it was only by the merit of extraordinary ser-

vices, that he could hope to atone for his irregular conduct, in assuming an independent command. Bern. Diaz, though abundantly disposed to place his own prowess, and that of his fellow-conquerors, in the most advantageous point of light, had not the same temptation to exaggerate; and it is probable that his account of the numbers approaches nearer to the truth. The assembling of an army of 150,000 men requires many previous arrangements, and such provisions for their subsistence as seems to be beyond the foresight of Americans. The degree of cultivation in Tlascala does not seem to have been so great, as to have furnished such a vast army with provisions. Though this province was so much better cultivated than other regions of New Spain, that it was called the *country of bread*; yet the Spaniards in their march suffered such want, that they were obliged to subsist upon *Tunas*, a species of fruit which grows wild in the fields. Herrera, Dec. ii. lib. vi. c. 5. p. 182.

Note LIII. p. 132.

THESE unhappy victims are said to be persons of distinction. It seems improbable that so great a number as fifty should be employed as spies. So many prisoners had been taken and dismissed, and the Tlascalans had sent so many messages to the Spanish quarters, that there appears to be no reason for hazarding the lives of so many considerable people, in order to procure information about the position and state of their camp. The barbarous manner in which Cortes treated a people unacquainted with the laws of war established among polished nations, appears so shocking to the later Spanish writers, that they diminish the number of those whom he punished so cruelly. Herrera says, that he cut off the hands of seven, and the thumbs of some more. Dec. ii. lib. ii. c. 8. De Solis relates, that the hands of fourteen or fifteen were cut off, and the thumbs of all the rest. Lib. ii. c. 20. But Cortes himself, Relat. p. 228. b. and after him Gomara, c. 48, affirm, that the hands of all the fifty were cut off.

Note LIV. p. 134.

THE horses were objects of the greatest astonishment to all the people of New Spain. At first they imagined the horse and his rider, like the Centaurs of the ancients, to be some monstrous animal of a terrible form; and supposing that their food was the same as that of men, brought flesh and bread to nourish them. Even after they discovered their mistake, they believed the horses devoured men in battle, and when they neighed, thought that they

were demanding their prey. It was not the interest of the Spaniards to undeceive them. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. vi. c. 11.

Note LV. p. 139.

ACCORDING to Bart. de las Casas, there was no reason for this massacre, and it was an act of wanton cruelty, perpetrated merely to strike terror into the people of New Spain. *Relac. de la Destruyc.* p. 17. &c. But the zeal of Las Casas often leads him to exaggerate. In opposition to him, Bern. Diaz, c. 83, asserts, that the first missionaries sent into New Spain by the emperor made a judicial inquiry into this transaction; and having examined the priests and elders of Cholula, found that there was a real conspiracy to cut off the Spaniards, and that the account given by Cortes was exactly true. As it was the object of Cortes at that time, and manifestly his interest, to gain the good-will of Montezuma, it is improbable that he should have taken a step which tended so visibly to alienate him from the Spaniards, if he had not believed it to be necessary for his own preservation. At the same time the Spaniards who served in America had such contempt for the natives, and thought them so little entitled to the common rights of men, that Cortes might hold the Cholulans to be guilty upon slight and imperfect evidence. The severity of the punishment was certainly excessive and atrocious.

Note LVI. p. 140.

THIS description is taken almost literally from Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who was so unacquainted with the art of composition, as to be incapable of embellishing his narrative. He relates in a simple and rude style what passed in his own mind, and that of his fellow-soldiers, on that occasion; "and let it not be thought strange," says he, "that I should write in this manner of what then happened, for it ought to be considered, that it is one thing to relate, another to have beheld things that were never before seen, or heard, or spoken of among men." Cap. 86. p. 64. b.

Note LVII. p. 150.

B. DIAZ del Castillo gives us some idea of the fatigue and hardships they underwent in performing this, and other parts of duty. During the nine months that they remained in Mexico, every man, without any distinction between officers and soldiers, slept on his arms in his quilted jacket and gorget. They lay on mats, or straw spread on the floor, and each was obliged to hold

himself as alert as if he had been on guard. "This," adds he, "became so habitual to me, that even now in my advanced age, I always sleep in my clothes, and never in any bed. When I visit my *Encomienda*, I reckon it suitable to my rank, to have a bed carried along with my other baggage, but I never go into it; but, according to custom, I lie in my clothes, and walk frequently during the night into the open air, to view the stars, as I was wont when in service." Cap. 108.

Note LVIII. p. 153.

CORTES himself, in his second dispatch to the emperor, does not explain the motives which induced him either to condemn Qualpopoca to the flames, or to put Montezuma in irons. Ramus. iii. 236. B. Diaz is silent with respect to his reasons for the former; and the only cause he assigns for the latter was, that he might meet with no interruption in executing the sentence pronounced against Qualpopoca, c. xcv. p. 75. But as Montezuma was his prisoner, and absolutely in his power, he had no reason to dread him, and the insult offered to that monarch could have no effect but to irritate him unnecessarily. Gomara supposes, that Cortes had no other object than to occupy Montezuma with his own distress and sufferings, that he might give less attention to what befel Qualpopoca. Cron. c. 89. Herrera adopts the same opinion. Dec. ii. lib. viii. c. 9. But it seems an odd expedient, in order to make a person bear one injury, to load him with another that is greater. De Solis imagines, that Cortes had nothing else in view than to intimidate Montezuma, so that he might make no attempt to rescue the victims from their fate; but the spirit of that monarch was so submissive, and he had so tamely given up the prisoners to the disposal of Cortes, that he had no cause to apprehend any opposition from him. If the explanation which I have attempted to give of Cortes's proceedings on this occasion be not admitted, it appears to me, that they must be reckoned among the wanton and barbarous acts of oppression which occur too often in the history of the conquest of America.

Note LIX. p. 156.

DE SOLIS asserts, lib. iv. c. 3, that the proposition of doing homage to the king of Spain came from Montezuma himself, and was made in order to induce the Spaniards to depart out of his dominions. He describes his conduct on this occasion as if it had been founded upon a scheme of profound policy, and executed with such refined address as to deceive Cortes himself. But there is no

hint or circumstance in the contemporary historians, Cortes, Diaz, or Gomara, to justify this theory. Montezuma, on other occasions, discovered no such extent of art and abilities. The anguish which he felt in performing this humbling ceremony is natural, if we suppose it to have been involuntary. But, according to the theory of De Solis, which supposes that Montezuma was executing what he himself had proposed, to have assumed an appearance of sorrow, would have been preposterous and inconsistent with his own design of deceiving the Spaniards.

Note LX. p. 159.

IN several of the provinces, the Spaniards, with all their industry and influence, could collect no gold. In others they procured only a few trinkets of small value. Montezuma assured Cortes, that the present which he offered to the king of Castile, after doing homage, consisted of all the treasure amassed by his father; and told him, that he had already distributed the rest of his gold and jewels among the Spaniards. B. Diaz, c. 104. Gomara relates, that all the silver collected amounted to 500 marks. Cron. c. 93. This agrees with the account given by Cortes, that the royal fifth of silver was 100 marks. Relat. 239. B. So that the sum total of silver was only 4000 ounces, at the rate of eight ounces a mark, which demonstrates the proportion of silver to gold to have been exceedingly small.

Note LXI. p. 160.

DE SOLIS, lib. iv. c. 1, calls in question the truth of this transaction, from no better reason than that it was inconsistent with that prudence which distinguishes the character of Cortes. But he ought to have recollected the impetuosity of his zeal at Tlascala, which was no less imprudent. He asserts, that the evidence for it rests upon the testimony of B. Diaz del Castillo, of Gomara, and of Herrera. They all concur, indeed, in mentioning this inconsiderate step which Cortes took; and they had good reason to do so, for Cortes himself relates this exploit in his second dispatch to the emperor, and seems to glory in it. Cort. Relat. Ramus. iii. 140. D. This is one instance, among many, of De Solis's having consulted with little attention the letters of Cortes to Charles V., from which the most authentic information with respect to his operations must be derived.

Note LXII. p. 163.

HERRERA and De Solis suppose that Valasquez was encouraged to equip this armament against Cortes by the accounts which he

received from Spain concerning the reception of the agents sent by the colony of Vera Cruz, and the warmth with which Fonseca bishop of Burgos had espoused his interest, and condemned the proceedings of Cortes. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. ix. c. 18. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5. But the chronological order of events refutes this supposition. Portocarrero and Montejo sailed from Vera Cruz, July 26, 1519. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. v. c. 4. They landed at St. Lucar in October, according to Herrera, *ibid.* But P. Martyr, who attended the court at that time, and communicated every occurrence of moment to his correspondents day by day, mentions the arrival of these agents for the first time in December, and speaks of it as a recent event. Epist. 650. All the historians agree, that the agents of Cortes had their first audience of the emperor at Tordesillas, when he went to that town to visit his mother in his way to St. Jago de Compostella. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. v. c. 4. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5. But the emperor set out from Valladolid for Tordesillas on the 11th of March, 1520; and P. Martyr mentions his having seen at that time the presents made to Charles. Epist. 1665. The armament under Narvaez sailed from Cuba in April, 1520. It is manifest, then, that Velasquez could not receive any account of what passed in this interview at Tordesillas, previous to his hostile preparations against Cortes. His real motives seem to be those which I have mentioned. The patent appointing him *Adelantado* of New Spain, with such extensive powers, bears date November 13. 1519. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 11. He might receive it about the beginning of January. Gomara takes notice, that as soon as this patent was delivered to him, he began to equip a fleet and levy forces. Chron. c. 96.

Note LXIII. p. 165.

DE SOLIS contends, that as Narvaez had no interpreters, he could hold no intercourse with the people of the provinces, nor converse with them in any way but by signs, and that it was equally impossible for him to carry on any communication with Montezuma. Liv. iv. c. 7. But it is upon the authority of Cortes himself, that I relate all the particulars of Narvaez's correspondence both with Montezuma and with his subjects in the maritime provinces. Relat. Ramus. iii. 244, A. C. Cortes affirms, that there was a mode of intercourse between Narvaez and the Mexicans, but does not explain how it was carried on. Bernal Diaz supplies this defect, and informs us, that the three deserters who joined Narvaez acted as interpreters, having acquired a competent knowledge of the language, c. 110. With his usual minuteness, he mentions their names and characters, and relates, in chapter 122, how they were

punished for their perfidy. The Spaniards had now resided above a year among the Mexicans; and it is not surprising, that several among them should have made some proficiency in speaking their language. This seems to have been the case. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 1. Both B. Diaz, who was present, and Herrera, the most accurate and best informed of all the Spanish writers, agree with Cortes in his account of the secret correspondence carried on with Montezuma. Dec. 2. lib. x. c. 18, 19. De Solis seems to consider it as a discredit to Cortes, his hero, that Montezuma should have been ready to engage in a correspondence with Narvaez. He supposes that monarch to have contracted such a wonderful affection for the Spaniards, that he was not solicitous to be delivered from them. After the indignity with which he had been treated, such an affection is incredible; and even De Solis is obliged to acknowledge, that it must be looked upon as one of the miracles which God had wrought to facilitate the conquest, lib. iv. c. 7. The truth is, Montezuma, however much overawed by his dread of the Spaniards, was extremely impatient to recover his liberty.

Note LXIV. p. 178.

THESE words I have borrowed from the anonymous Account of the European Settlements in America, published by Dodsley, in two volumes 8vo.; a work of so much merit, that I should think there is hardly any writer in the age who ought to be ashamed of acknowledging himself to be the author of it.

Note LXV. p. 184.

THE contemporary historians differ considerably with respect to the loss of the Spaniards on this occasion. Cortes, in his second dispatch to the emperor, makes the number only 150. *Relat. ap. Ramus. iii. p. 249. A.* But it was manifestly his interest, at that juncture, to conceal from the court of Spain the full extent of the loss which he had sustained. De Solis, always studious to diminish every misfortune that befel his countrymen, rates their loss at about two hundred men. *Lib. iv. c. 19.* B. Diaz affirms, that they lost 870 men, and that only 440 escaped from Mexico, c. 128. p. 108. B. Palafox, bishop of Los Angeles, who seems to have inquired into the early transactions of his countrymen in New Spain, with great attention, confirms the account of B. Diaz, with respect to the extent of their loss. *Virtudes del Indio, p. 22.* Gomara states their loss at 450 men. *Cron. c. 109.* Some months afterward, when Cortes had received several reinforcements, he mustered his troops, and found them to be only 590. *Relat. ap.*

Ramus. iii. p. 255. E. Now, as Narvaez brought 880 men into New Spain, and about 400 of Cortes's soldiers were then alive, it is evident that his loss, in the retreat from Mexico, must have been much more considerable than what he mentions. B. Diaz, solicitous to magnify the dangers and sufferings to which he and his fellow-conquerors were exposed, may have exaggerated their loss ; but, in my opinion, it cannot well be estimated at less than 600 men.

Note LXVI. p. 201.

SOME remains of this great work are still visible, and the spot where the brigantines were built and launched, is still pointed out to strangers. Torquemada viewed them. Monarq. Indiana, vol. i. p. 531.

Note LXVII. p. 208.

THE station of Alvarado on the causeway of Tacuba was the nearest to the city. Cortes observes, that there they could distinctly observe what passed when their countrymen were sacrificed. Relat. ap. Ramus. iii. p. 273. E. B. Diaz, who belonged to Alvarado's division, relates what he beheld with his own eyes. C. 152. p. 148. b. 149. a. Like a man whose courage was so clear as to be above suspicion, he describes with his usual simplicity the impression which this spectacle made upon him. "Before," says he, "I saw the breasts of my companions opened, their hearts yet fluttering, offered to an accursed idol, and their flesh devoured by their exulting enemies ; I was accustomed to enter a battle not only without fear, but with high spirit. But from that time I never advanced to fight the Mexicans without a secret horror and anxiety ; my heart trembled at the thoughts of the death which I had seen them suffer." He takes care to add, that as soon as the combat began, his terror went off ; and, indeed, his adventurous bravery on every occasion is full evidence of this. B. Diaz, c. 156. p. 157. a.

Note LXVIII. p. 213.

ONE circumstance in this siege merits particular notice. The account which the Spanish writers give of the numerous armies employed in the attack or defence of Mexico seems to be incredible. According to Cortes himself, he had at one time 150,000 auxiliary Indians in his service. Relat. Ramus. iii. 275. E. Gomara asserts, that they were above 200,000. Cron. c. 136. Herrera, an author of higher authority, says they were about 200,000. Dec. 3. lib. i. c. 19. None of the contemporary writers ascertain

explicitly the number of persons in Mexico during the siege. But Cortes on several occasions mentions the number of Mexicans who were slain, or who perished for want of food; and, if we may rely on those circumstances, it is probable that above two hundred thousand must have been shut up in the town. But the quantity of provisions necessary for the subsistence of such vast multitudes assembled in one place, during three months, is so great, that it requires so much foresight and arrangement to collect these, and lay them up in magazines, so as to be certain of a regular supply, that one can hardly believe that this could be accomplished in a country where agriculture was so imperfect as in the Mexican empire, where there were no tame animals, and by a people naturally so improvident, and so incapable of executing a complicated plan, as the most improved Americans. The Spaniards with all their care and attention, fared very poorly, and were often reduced to extreme distress for want of provisions. B. Diaz, p. 142. Cortes Relat. 271. D. Cortes on one occasion mentions slightly the subsistence of his army; and after acknowledging that they were often in great want, adds, that they received supplies from the people of the country, of fish, and of some fruit, which he calls the cherries of the country. Ibid. B. Diaz says, that they had cakes of maize, and serasas de la tierra; and when the season of these was over, another fruit, which he calls *Tunas*; but their most comfortable subsistence was a root which the Indians used as food, to which he gives the name of *Quiltes*, p. 142. The Indian auxiliaries had one means of subsistence more than the Spaniards. They fed upon the bodies of the Mexicans whom they killed in battle. Cort. Relat. 176. C. B. Diaz confirms his relation, and adds, that when the Indians returned from Mexico to their own country, they carried with them large quantities of the flesh of the Mexicans salted or dried, as a most acceptable present to their friends, that they might have the pleasure of feeding upon the bodies of their enemies in their festivals, p. 157. De Solis, who seems to consider it as an imputation of discredit to his countrymen, that they should act in concert with auxiliaries who fed upon human flesh, is solicitous to prove that the Spaniards endeavoured to prevent their associates from eating the bodies of the Mexicans, lib. v. c. 24. But he has no authority for this from the original historians. Neither Cortes himself, nor B. Diaz, seem to have had any such scruple; and, on many occasions, mention the Indian repasts, which were become familiar to them, without any mark of abhorrence. Even with this additional stock of food for the Indians, it was hardly possible to procure subsistence for armies amounting to such numbers as we find in the Spanish writers. Perhaps the best solution of the difficulty is, to adopt the opinion

of B. Diaz del Castillo, the most artless of all the *Historiadores primitivos*. "When Gomara (says he) on some occasions relates that there were so many thousand Indians our auxiliaries, and on others, that there were so many thousand houses in this or that town, no regard is to be paid to his enumeration, as he has no authority for it, the numbers not being in reality the fifth of what he relates. If we add together the different numbers which he mentions, that country would contain more millions than there are in Castile." C. 129. But though some considerable deduction should certainly be made from the Spanish accounts of the Mexican forces, they must have been very numerous; for nothing but an immense superiority in number could have enabled them to withstand a body of nine hundred Spaniards, conducted by a leader of such abilities as Cortes.

Note LXIX. p. 226.

IN relating the oppressive and cruel proceedings of the conquerors of New Spain, I have not followed B. de las Casas as my guide. His account of them, *Relat. de la Destruyc.* p. 18, &c. is manifestly exaggerated. It is from the testimony of Cortes himself, and of Gomara, who wrote under his eye, that I have taken my account of the punishment of the Panucans, and they relate it without any disapprobation. B. Diaz, contrary to his usual custom, mentions it only in general terms, c. 162. Herrera, solicitous to extenuate this barbarous action of his countrymen, though he mentions 63 caziques, and 400 men of note, as being condemned to the flames, asserts, that thirty only were burnt, and the rest pardoned. Dec. 3. lib. v. c. 7. But this is contrary to the testimony of the original historians, particularly of Gomara, whom it appears he had consulted, as he adopts several of his expressions in this passage. The punishment of Guatimozin is related by the most authentic of the Spanish writers. Torquemada has extracted from a history of Tezeuco, composed in the Mexican tongue, an account of this transaction, more favourable to Guatimozin than that of the Spanish authors. *Mon. Indiana*, i. 575. According to the Mexican account, Cortes had scarcely a shadow of evidence to justify such a wanton act of cruelty. B. Diaz affirms, that Guatimozin and his fellow-sufferers asserted their innocence with their last breath, and that many of the Spanish soldiers condemned this action of Cortes, as equally unnecessary and unjust, p. 200. b. 201. a.

Note LXX. p. 229.

THE motive for undertaking this expedition was, to punish Christoval de Olid, one of his officers who had revolted against him, and aimed at establishing an independent jurisdiction. Cortes regarded this insurrection as of such dangerous example, and dreaded so much the abilities and popularity of its author, that in person he led the body of troops destined to suppress it. He marched, according to Gomara, three thousand miles, through a country abounding with thick forests, rugged mountains, deep rivers, thinly inhabited, and cultivated only in a few places. What he suffered from famine, from the hostility of the natives, from the climate, and from hardships of every species, has nothing in history parallel to it, but what occurs in the adventures of the other discoverers and conquerors of the New World. Cortes was employed in this dreadful service above two years; and though it was not distinguished by any splendid event, he exhibited, during the course of it, greater personal courage, more fortitude of mind, more perseverance and patience, than in any other period or scene in his life. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. vi. vii. viii. ix. Gomara Chron. c. 163—177. B. Diaz, 174—190. Cortes, MS. *penes me*. Were one to write a life of Cortes, the account of this expedition should occupy a splendid place in it. In a general history of America, as the expedition was productive of no great event, the mention of it is sufficient.

Note LXXI. p. 230.

ACCORDING to Herrera, the treasure which Cortes brought with him, consisted of fifteen hundred marks of wrought plate, two hundred thousand pesos of fine gold, and ten thousand of inferior standard, many rich jewels, one in particular worth forty thousand pesos, and several trinkets and ornaments of value. Dec. 4. lib. iii. c. 8. lib. iv. c. 1. He afterward engaged to give a portion with his daughter of a hundred thousand pesos. Gomara Cron. c. 237. The fortune which he left his sons was very considerable. But as we have before related, the sum divided among the conquerors, on the first reduction of Mexico, was very small. There appears, then, to be some reason for suspecting that the accusations of Cortes's enemies were not altogether destitute of foundation. They charged him with having applied to his own use a disproportionate share of the Mexican spoils; with having concealed the royal treasures of Montezuma and Guatimozin; with defrauding the king of his fifth; and robbing his followers of what was due to them. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 15. dec. 4. lib. iii. c. 8. Some of the conquerors

themselves entertained suspicions of the same kind with respect to this part of his conduct. B. Diaz, c. 157.

Note LXXII. p. 234.

IN tracing the progress of the Spanish arms in New Spain, we have followed Cortes himself as our most certain guide. His dispatches to the emperor contain a minute account of his operations. But the unlettered conqueror of Peru was incapable of relating his own exploits. Our information with respect to them, and other transactions in Peru, is derived, however, from contemporary and respectable authors.

The most early account of Pizarro's transactions in Peru was published by Francisco de Xerez, his secretary. It is a simple unadorned narrative, carried down no farther than the death of Atahualpa, in 1533; for the author returned to Spain in 1534; and, soon after he landed, printed at Seville his short History of the Conquest of Peru, addressed to the emperor.

Don Pedro Sancho, an officer who served under Pizarro, drew up an account of his expedition, which was translated into Italian by Ramusio, and inserted in his valuable collection, but has never been published in its original language. Sancho returned to Spain at the same time with Xerez. Great credit is due to what both these authors relate concerning the progress and operations of Pizarro; but the residence of the Spaniards in Peru had been so short, at the time when they left it, and their intercourse with the natives so slender, that their knowledge of the Peruvian manners and customs is very imperfect.

The next contemporary historian is Pedro Cieza de Leon, who published his *Cronica del Peru*, at Seville in 1553. If he had finished all that he proposes in the general division of his work, it would have been the most complete history which had been published of any region in the New World. He was well qualified to execute it, having served during seventeen years in America, and having visited in person most of the provinces concerning which he had occasion to write. But only the first part of his chronicle has been printed. It contains a description of Peru, and several of the adjacent provinces, with an account of the institutions and customs of the natives, and is written with so little art, and such an apparent regard for truth, that one must regret the loss of the other parts of his work.

This loss is amply supplied by Don Augustine Zaratè, who published, in 1555, his *Historia del Descubrimiento y Conquista de la Provincia del Peru*. Zaratè was a man of rank and education, and employed in Peru as comptroller-general of the public revenue.

His history, whether we attend to its matter or composition, is a book of considerable merit; as he had an opportunity to be well informed, and seems to have been inquisitive with respect to the manners and transactions of the Peruvians, great credit is due to his testimony.

Don Diego Fernandez published his *Historia del Peru* in 1571. His sole object is to relate the dissensions and civil wars of the Spaniards in that empire. As he served in a public station in Peru, and was well acquainted both with the country, and with the principal actors in those singular scenes which he describes, as he possessed sound understanding and great impartiality, his work may be ranked among those of the historians most distinguished for their industry in research, or their capacity in judging with respect to the events which they relate.

The last author who can be reckoned among the contemporary historians of the conquest of Peru, is Garcilasso de la Vega, Inca. For though the first part of his work, entitled *Commentarios Reales del Origin de los Incas Reies del Peru*, was not published sooner than the year 1609, seventy-six years after the death of Atahualpa, the last emperor, yet as he was born in Peru, and was the son of an officer of distinction among the Spanish conquerors, by a *Coya*, or lady of the royal race, on account of which he always took the name of Inca; as he was master of the language spoken by the Incas, and acquainted with the traditions of his countrymen, his authority is rated very high, and often placed above that of all the other historians. His work, however, is little more than a commentary upon the Spanish writers of the Peruvian story, and composed of quotations taken from the authors whom I have mentioned. This is the idea which he himself gives of it, lib. i. c. 10. Nor is it in the account of facts only that he follows them servilely. Even in explaining the institutions and rites of his ancestors, his information seems not to be more perfect than theirs. His explanation of the Quipos is almost the same with that of Acosta. He produces no specimen of Peruvian poetry, but that wretched one which he borrows from Blas Valera, an early missionary, whose memoirs have never been published. Lib. ii. c. 15. As for composition, arrangement, or a capacity of distinguishing between what is fabulous, what is probable, and what is true, one searches for them in vain in the commentaries of the Inca. His work, however, notwithstanding its great defects, is not altogether destitute of use. Some traditions which he received from his countrymen are preserved in it. His knowledge of the Peruvian language has enabled him to correct some errors of the Spanish writers, and he has inserted in it some curious facts taken from authors whose works were never published, and are now lost.

Note LXXIII. p. 239.

ONE may form an idea both of the hardships which they endured, and of the unhealthful climate in the regions which they visited, from the extraordinary mortality that prevailed among them. Pizarro carried out 112 men, Almagro 70. In less than nine months 130 of these died. Few fell by the sword; most of them were cut off by diseases. Xeres, p. 180.

Note LXXIV. p. 241.

THIS island, says Herrera, is rendered so uncomfortable by the unwholesomeness of its climate, its impenetrable woods, its rugged mountains, and the multitude of insects and reptiles, that it is seldom any softer epithet than that of *infernal* is employed in describing it. The sun is almost never seen there, and throughout the year it hardly ever ceases to rain. Dec. 3. lib. x. c. 3. Dampier touched at this island in the year 1685; and his account of the climate is not more favourable. Vol. i. p. 172. He, during his cruise on the coast, visited most of the places where Pizarro landed, and his description of them throws light on the narrations of the early Spanish historians.

Note LXXV. p. 254.

By this time horses had multiplied greatly in the Spanish settlements on the continent. When Cortes began his expedition in the year 1518, though his armament was more considerable than that of Pizarro, and composed of persons superior in rank to those who invaded Peru, he could procure no more than sixteen horses.

Note LXXVI. p. 255.

IN the year 1740, D. Ant. Ulloa, and D. George Juan, travelled from Guayquil to Motupe, by the same route which Pizarro took. From the description of their journey, one may form an idea of the difficulty of his march. The sandy plains between St. Michael de Pieur and Motupe extend 90 miles, without water, without a tree, a plant, or any green thing, on a dreary stretch of burning sand. Voyage, tom. i. p. 399, &c.

Note LXXVII. p. 260.

THIS extravagant and unseasonable discourse of Valverde has been censured by all historians, and with justice. But though he

seems to have been an illiterate and bigotted monk, nowise resembling the good Olmedo, who accompanied Cortes; the absurdity of his address to Atahualpa must not be charged wholly upon him. His harangue is evidently a translation or paraphrase of that form, concerted by a junto of Spanish divines and lawyers in the year 1509, for explaining the right of their king to the sovereignty of the New World, and for directing the officers employed in America how they should take possession of any new country. See vol. i. note xxiii. The sentiments contained in Valverde's harangue must not then be imputed to the bigotted imbecility of a particular man, but to that of the age. But Gomara and Benzoni relate one circumstance concerning Valverde, which, if authentic, renders him an object, not of contempt only, but of horror. They assert, that during the whole action Valverde continued to excite the soldiers to slaughter, calling on them to strike the enemy, not with the edge, but with the points of their swords. Gom. Chron. c. 113. Benz. Histor. Nov. Orbis, lib. iii. c. 3. Such behaviour was very different from that of the Roman Catholic clergy in other parts of America, where they uniformly exerted their influence to protect the Indians, and to moderate the ferocity of their countrymen.

Note LXXVIII. p. 261.

Two different systems have been formed concerning the conduct of Atahualpa. The Spanish writers, in order to justify the violence of their countrymen, contend that all the Inca's professions of friendship were feigned; and that his intention in agreeing to an interview with Pizarro at Caxamalca, was to cut off him and his followers at one blow; that for this purpose he advanced with such a numerous body of attendants, who had arms concealed under their garments to execute this scheme. This is the account given by Xerez and Zaratè, and adopted by Herrera. But if it had been the plan of the Inca to destroy the Spaniards, one can hardly imagine that he would have permitted them to march unmolested through the desert of Motupe, or have neglected to defend the passes in the mountains, where they might have been attacked with so much advantage. If the Peruvians marched to Caxamalca with an intention to fall upon the Spaniards, it is inconceivable that of so great a body of men, prepared for action, not one should attempt to make resistance, but all tamely suffer themselves to be butchered by an enemy whom they were armed to attack. Atahualpa's mode of advancing to the interview has the aspect of a peaceable procession, not of a military enterprise. He himself, and his followers, were in their habits of ceremony, preceded, as on days of solemnity, by unarmed harbingers. Though rude

nations are frequently cunning and false, yet, if a scheme of deception and treachery must be imputed either to a monarch, that had no great reason to be alarmed at a visit from strangers who solicited admission into his presence as friends, or to an adventurer so daring, and so little scrupulous as Pizarro, one cannot hesitate in determining where to fix the presumption of guilt. Even amidst the endeavours of the Spanish writers to palliate the proceedings of Pizarro, one plainly perceives that it was his intention, as well as his interest, to seize the Inca, and that he had taken measures for that purpose previous to any suspicion of that monarch's designs.

Garcilasso de la Vega, extremely solicitous to vindicate his countrymen, the Peruvians, from the crime of having concerted the destruction of Pizarro and his followers, and no less afraid to charge the Spaniards with improper conduct towards the Inca, has framed another system. He relates, that a man of majestic form, with a long beard, and garments reaching to the ground, having appeared in a vision to Viracocha, the eighth Inca, and declared that he was a child of the Sun, that monarch built a temple in honour of this person, and erected an image of him, resembling as nearly as possible the singular form in which he had exhibited himself to his view. In this temple divine honours were paid to him, by the name of Viracocha. P. i. lib. iv. c. 21. lib. v. c. 22. When the Spaniards first appeared in Peru, the length of their beards, and the dress they wore, struck every person so much with their likeness to the image of Viracocha, that they supposed them to be children of the Sun, who had descended from heaven to earth. All concluded, that the fatal period of the Peruvian empire was now approaching, and that the throne would be occupied by new possessors. Atahualpa himself, considering the Spaniards as messengers from heaven, was so far from entertaining any thoughts of resisting them, that he determined to yield implicit obedience to their commands. From these sentiments flowed his professions of love and respect. To those were owing the cordial reception of Soto and Ferdinand Pizarro in his camp, and the submissive reverence with which he himself advanced to visit the Spanish general in his quarters; but from the gross ignorance of Philipillo, the interpreter, the declaration of the Spaniards, and his answer to it, were so ill explained, that by their mutual inability to comprehend each other's intentions, the fatal rencounter at Caxamalca, with all its dreadful consequences, was occasioned.

It is remarkable, that no traces of this superstitious veneration of the Peruvians for the Spaniards, are to be found either in Xerez, or Sancho, or Zarate, previous to the interview at Caxamalca; and yet the two former served under Pizarro at that time, and the

latter visited Peru soon after the conquest. If either the Inca himself, or his messengers, had addressed the Spaniards in the words which Garcilasso puts in their mouths, they must have been struck with such submissive declarations; and they would certainly have availed themselves of them to accomplish their own designs with greater facility. Garcilasso himself, though his narrative of the intercourse between the Inca and Spaniards, preceding the rencounter at Caxamalca, is founded on the supposition of his believing them to be Viracochas, or divine beings, p. ii. lib. i. c. 17, &c., yet, with his usual inattention and inaccuracy, he admits, in another place, that the Peruvians did not recollect the resemblance between them and the god Viracocha, until the fatal disasters subsequent to the defeat at Caxamalca, and then only began to call them Viracochas. P. i. lib. v. c. 21. This is confirmed by Herrera, dec. 5. lib. ii. c. 12. In many different parts of America, if we may believe the Spanish writers, their countrymen were considered as divine beings who had descended from heaven. But in this instance, as in many which occur in the intercourse between nations whose progress in refinement is very unequal, the ideas of those who used the expression were different from the ideas of those who heard it. For such is the idiom of the Indian languages, or such is the simplicity of those who speak them, that when they see any thing with which they were formerly unacquainted, and of which they do not know the origin, they say that it came down from heaven. Nugnez. Ram. iii. 327. C.

The account which I have given of the sentiments and proceedings of the Peruvians, appears to be more natural and consistent than either of the two preceding, and is better supported by the facts related by the contemporary historians.

According to Xerez, p. 200, two thousand Peruvians were killed. Sancho makes the number of the slain six or seven thousand. Ram. iii. 274. D. By Garcilasso's account, five thousand were massacred. P. ii. lib. i. c. 25. The number which I have mentioned, being the medium between the extremes, may probably be nearest the truth.

Note LXXIX. p. 262.

NOTHING can be a more striking proof of this, than that three Spaniards travelled from Caxamalca to Cuzco. The distance between them is six hundred miles. In every place throughout this great extent of country, they were treated with all the honours which the Peruvians paid to their sovereigns, and even to their divinities. Under pretext of amassing what was wanting for the ransom of the Inca, they demanded the plates of gold with which

the walls of the Temple of the Sun in Cuzco were adorned; and though the priests were unwilling to alienate those sacred ornaments, and the people refused to violate the shrine of their god, the three Spaniards, with their own hands, robbed the temple of part of this valuable treasure; and such was the reverence of the natives for their persons, that though they beheld this act of sacrilege with astonishment, they did not attempt to prevent or disturb the commission of it. Zarate, lib. ii. c. 6. Sancho ap. Ramus. iii. 375. D.

Note LXXX. p. 272.

ACCORDING to Herrera, the spoil of Cuzco, after setting apart the king's *fifth*, was divided among 480 persons. Each received 4000 pesos. This amounts to 1,920,000 pesos. Dec. v. lib. vi. c. 3. But as the general, and other officers, were entitled to a share far greater than that of the private men, the sum total must have risen much beyond what I have mentioned. Gomara, c. 123. and Zarate, lib. ii. c. 8, satisfy themselves with asserting in general, that the plunder of Cuzco was of greater value than the ransom of Atahualpa.

Note LXXXI. p. 274.

No expedition in the New World was conducted with more persevering courage than that of Alvarado, and in none were greater hardships endured. Many of the persons engaged in it were, like their leader, veterans who had served under Cortes, inured to all the rigour of American war. Such of my readers as have not an opportunity of perusing the striking description of their sufferings by Zarate or Herrera, may form some idea of the nature of their march from the sea-coast to Quito, by consulting the account which D. Ant. Ulloa gives of his own journey in 1736, nearly in the same route. Voy. tom. i. p. 178, &c., or that of M. Bouguer, who proceeded from Puerto Viejo to Quito, by the same road which Alvarado took. He compares his own journey with that of the Spanish leader, and by the comparison gives a most striking idea of the boldness and patience of Alvarado, in forcing his way through so many obstacles. Voyage du Perou, p. 28, &c.

Note LXXXII. p. 274.

ACCORDING to Herrera, there was entered, on account of the king, in gold 155,300 pesos, and 5400 marks (each eight ounces) of silver, besides several vessels and ornaments, some of gold; and others of silver; on account of private persons, in gold 499,000 pesos, 54,000 marks of silver. Dec. 5. lib. vi. c. 13.

Note LXXXIII. p. 282.

THE Peruvians not only imitated the military arts of the Spaniards, but had recourse to devices of their own. As the cavalry were the chief objects of their terror, they endeavoured to render them incapable of acting, by means of a long thong with a stone fastened to each end. This, when thrown by a skilful hand, twisted about the horse and its rider, and entangled them so as to obstruct their motions. Herrera mentions this as an invention of their own. Dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 4. But as I have observed, vol. vii. p. 50, this weapon is common among several barbarous tribes towards the extremity of South America; and it is more probable that the Peruvians had observed the dexterity with which they used it in hunting, and on this occasion adopted it themselves. The Spaniards were considerably annoyed by it; Herrera, *ibid.* Another instance of the ingenuity of the Peruvians deserves mention. By turning a river out of its channel, they overflowed a valley, in which a body of the enemy was posted, so suddenly, that it was with the utmost difficulty the Spaniards made their escape. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 5.

Note LXXXIV. p. 297.

HERRERA's account of Orellana's voyage is the most minute, and apparently the most accurate. It was probably taken from the journal of Orellana himself. But the dates are not distinctly marked. His navigation down the Coca, or Napo, begun early in February 1541; and he arrived at the mouth of the river on the 26th of August, having spent near seven months in the voyage. M. de la Condamine, in the year 1743, sailed from Cuenca to Para, a settlement of the Portuguese at the mouth of the river, a navigation much longer than that of Orellana, in less than four months. Voyage, p. 179. But the two adventurers were very differently provided for the voyage. This hazardous undertaking, to which ambition prompted Orellana, and to which the love of science led M. de la Condamine, was undertaken in the year 1769, by Madame Godin des Odonais, from conjugal affection. The narrative of the hardships which she suffered, of the dangers to which she was exposed, and of the disasters which befel her, is one of the most singular and affecting stories in any language, exhibiting in her conduct a striking picture of the fortitude which distinguishes the one sex, mingled with the sensibility and tenderness peculiar to the other. *Lettre de M. Godin à M. de la Condamine.*

Note LXXXV. p. 300.

HERRERA gives a striking picture of their indigence. Twelve gentlemen, who had been officers of distinction under Almagro, lodged in the same house, and having but one cloak among them, it was worn alternately by him who had occasion to appear in public, while the rest, from the want of a decent dress, were obliged to keep within doors. Their former friends and companions were so much afraid of giving offence to Pizarro, that they durst not entertain or even converse with them. One may conceive what was the condition, and what the indignation of men once accustomed to power and opulence, when they felt themselves poor and despised, without a roof under which to shelter their heads, while they beheld others, whose merit and services were not equal to theirs, living in splendour in sumptuous edifices. Dec. 6. lib. viii. c. 6.

Note LXXXVI. p. 310.

HERRERA, whose accuracy entitles him to great credit, asserts, that Gonzalo Pizarro possessed domains in the neighbourhood of Chuquesaca de la Plata, which yielded him an annual revenue greater than that of the archbishop of Toledo, the best endowed see in Europe. Dec. 7. lib. vi. c. 3.

Note LXXXVII. p. 322.

ALL the Spanish writers describe his march, and the distress of both parties, very minutely. Zaratè observes, that hardly any parallel to it occurs in history, either with respect to the length of the retreat, or the ardour of the pursuit. Pizarro, according to his computation, followed the viceroy upwards of three thousand miles. Lib. v. c. 16. 26.

Note LXXXVIII. p. 334.

IT amounted, according to Fernandez, the best informed historian of that period, to one million four hundred thousand pesos. Lib. ii. c. 79.

Note LXXXIX. p. 335.

CARVAJAL, from the beginning, had been an advocate for an accommodation with Gasca. Finding Pizarro incapable of holding that bold course which he originally suggested, he recommended to

him a timely submission to his sovereign as the safest measure. When the president's offers were first communicated to Carvajal, "By our Lady (says he, in that strain of buffoonery which was familiar to him) the priest issues gracious bulls. He gives them both good and cheap; let us not only accept them, but wear them as relics about our necks." Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 63.

Note XC. p. 340.

DURING the rebellion of Gonzalo Pizarro, seven hundred men were killed in battle, and three hundred and eighty were hanged or beheaded. Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 4. Above three hundred of these were cut off by Carvajal. Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 91. Zarate makes the number of those put to a violent death five hundred. Lib. vii. c. 1.

END OF VOL. VII.

A
198

